The FOOLISHNESS of the GOSPEL of JESUS CHRIST

PJ Stassen

The Foolishness of the GOSPEL of JESUS CHRIST

The Foolishness of God
… Wiser than the Wisdom of Men

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PJ Stassen
CENTURION
South Africa

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Dedicated to

Pieter Stassen
1978-1978

Our Firstborn Already With Jesus

The song is ended, but the memory lingers on.

(Irving Berlin, 1888-1989)

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INTRODUCTION

One of the many cosmic mysteries I often wrestle with is how God could look on any person in a crowd and immediately recognise the creative, divine potential in him, so much so for him (or her) to actually be saved and made into a worthy heavenly citizen, despite such a person's multitudinous multiplicities of a plethora of many sins, crimes against heaven, moral, social and cultural indiscretions and other (probably disgusting) past failures and affronts against God and man.

I mean, I could perfectly understand that God so loved the world that Jesus would die for sinners and for the sins of the world; but, however, would He really die for a jerk like me? Did God even love jerks? Does He really see His way clear to save and transform jerks, the proverbial "untouchables" of the immoral, failing class, too? Amazing.

They say that every man, at least those who have a soul, will, by the end of his life, have had a 'Life Review', either prompted by his own critical, neurological restiveness or, perhaps even sparked by the Holy Creator Himself. It is a frightening experience and an unsettling ordeal, i.e., to see oneself in the full, merciless, ultra-violet light of one's own provoking spirit or God's searching, divine Spirit, for the first time in seventy or eighty years, and to see oneself in the *light of non-negotiable truth,* i.e., with all our embarrassing warts and wrinkles, so patiently and nonchalantly accumulated over the decades, glaringly apparent and shamelessly exposed!

By now, most of us probably have seen how angry those dogs who, for the first time, are suddenly faced with an image of themselves in a mirror, can get: shocked, enraged, and ready to fight. Interestingly, the chimpanzee, on the other hand, is more circumspect; he, instead, would approach cautiously, stealthily, and, upon reaching the mirror, would slap the obnoxious image opposite him in the face, turn around and run away at breakneck speed in consternation, i.e., in mortal fear of his safety (because he was slapped back too).

So, it suddenly dawned on me: If we really had had any soul, any common sense, any sacred, ethical impertinence, we would have looked into a mirror at our reflected image in the same way too: we would have been shocked, enraged and disgusted and, even would have slapped our mirror image in the face, turned around and sped away at breakneck speed in consternation and disgust too.

We laugh at those stupid dogs, forgetting that dogs as a rule only rarely would bite the hand that feeds them, while we, the civilised, the educated and hyper-modernised sophisticates, would (on the other hand) sometimes do it to a friend at the drop of a hat.

It is said that Mark Twain held dogs in high esteem, viewing them as embodiments of virtues humans often lacked. In a 1903 letter, he reportedly wrote, *"The dog is a gentleman; I hope to go to his heaven, not man's."*

This sentiment, echoed in the apocryphal quote about dogs and heaven, underscores his belief that dogs possess a moral purity absent in humans. He

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saw dogs as loyal, selfless, and free from hypocrisy, qualities he frequently found wanting in people. So, I rest my case … it is only by the "foolishness of the Gospel" that we have any hope of redemption at all. By human foolishness we have fallen; by Divine Foolishness we must be saved.

In the final analysis, and, after everything has been said and done, Christ's salvaging of a wreck of a sinner from the cesspools of unbelief, debauchery, ignorance and sin, constitutes a far more remarkable miracle were the wreck of the Titanic to be stunningly salvaged from the icy oceans that buried it.

P.J. Stassen
Centurion
SOUTH AFRICA.

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Chapter 1

THE 'NEW ATHEISM' DISMISSED

ATHEIST:

A person who does not believe in Absolute Truth, accept for the absolute truth of Atheism

The question often comes up: Why won't atheists accept the Gospel? Reasons are often manifold, of which a few are elaborated upon below.

1. **WHY ATHEISTS AND SKEPTICS CANNOT UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THE GOSPEL.** Basically, there are three primary reasons:

1.1 **The Atheist probably is not born again.** Atheists & sceptics may not be 'born-again' and able to see, discover and understand the kingdom of God (as articulated by the gospel of Jesus Christ); it is imperative that a person be 'born again'. The Bible says:

> *"And there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to Him, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles which you do unless God is with him. Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said to Him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."*
>
> [John 3:1-5MKJV].

Theologians refer to this phenomenon (of being born-again) as 'spiritual regeneration'. The Bible says:

> *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*
>
> [John 3:6MKJV].

1.2 **The 'Natural Man' has a hard time understanding the Gospel.** The gospel of Jesus Christ comes across as 'foolishness' to the atheist and sceptic because the gospel must be spiritually discerned. The Bible says:

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> "*But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*"
>
> [1 Corinthians 2:14MKJV].

The natural man will thus, by default, consider the gospel as foolishness, and, unless he repents will probably, in Eternity, be cut off from the presence of God forever. Sadly, the Bible says:

> *"For the preaching of the cross is foolishness to those being lost, but to us being saved, it is the power of God."*
>
> [1 Corinthians 1:18MKJV].

Hence, the earnest encouragement from Jesus Christ Himself:

> *"Do not marvel that I said to you, You must be born again."*
>
> [John 3:7MKJ].

The only thing standing in the way of saving faith is pride, not lack of knowledge. Humility, i.e., the humility that will accept the words, character and bona fides of Jesus Christ in simple faith, has great reward, for, without faith, it is impossible to please God. The Bible says:

> "*But without faith it is impossible to please Him (GOD), for he who comes to God must believe that He is (EXISTS) and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*"
>
> [Hebrews 11:6MKJV].

1.3 **Faith Unlocks Understanding.** Atheists and sceptics refuse to believe the gospel in good faith, an attitude that bars them from understanding the gospel. We are not first-century Christians or people who had walked with Jesus; hence we have no choice but to accept the bona fides of Jesus Christ, founded on His accomplishments, reputation, proven moral gravitas and transformational historic effect on the world through the centuries, in good faith. *Faith,* not *Seeing,* unlocks understanding, unlocks spiritual regeneration. The Christian walk starts with repenting from unbelief to believing the Gospel. The Bible says:

> *"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,*
> *And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."*
>
> [Mark1:14-15KJV].

> "*Because if you confess the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.*"
>
> [Romans 10:9MKJV].

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2. **PROMINENT ATHEISTS TO UNGRACE THE LANDSCAPE.** Here follows a concise summary of the atheistic views of some prominent figures based on their public writings, talks, and stances:

2.1 **Bertrand Russell.** A philosopher who rejected religion as unprovable and often harmful. He saw belief in God as rooted in fear and tradition, not reason, famously arguing in his book, *Why I Am Not a Christian,* that evidence for a deity is lacking, and that morality doesn't need a divine basis. He leaned agnostic but lived as a practical atheist.

One wonders, however, where this magic "morality" has had its origins in the first place.

2.2 **Richard Dawkins.** A biologist and outspoken critic of religion, Dawkins asserts that God's existence is a scientific hypothesis (and a failing one) due to zero empirical evidence. In his book, *The God Delusion,* he calls faith "irrational" and religion "a source of division", pushing evolutionary naturalism as a sufficient explanation for life.

One wonders, however, where this magic "evolutionary naturalism" has had its origins in the first place.

2.3 **Christopher Hitchens.** A writer and polemicist, Hitchens attacked religion as man-made and oppressive in his book, *God Is Not Great.* He viewed belief in God as a surrender of reason, arguing that morality comes from human empathy, not divine command, and relished debating theists to expose dogma's so-called "flaws".

One wonders, however where this magic "human empathy" has had its origins in the first place.

2.4 **Daniel Dennett.** A philosopher focused on consciousness, Dennett sees religion as a natural phenomenon (i.e., evolved, not divinely inspired). In his book, *Breaking the Spell,* he treats belief in God as a cultural artifact dissectible by science, and dismisses supernatural claims as untestable and unnecessary.

One wonders, however, where this magic "consciousness" has had its origins in the first place.

2.5 **Bill Nye.** A science communicator, Nye's atheism is less philosophical, more practical. He argues that evidence-based thinking (like evolution) clashes with religious literalism, especially creationism, which he's famously debated. He's less about attacking God than promoting reason over faith, apparently neglecting the possibility that it may be the very *reason* of Christians that leads them to *faith* in the first place.

One wonders, however, also where this magic "reason" has had its origins in the first place.

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2.6 **Sam Harris.** A neuroscientist and writer, Harris critiques religion as a source of irrationality and violence in his book, *The End of Faith.* He rejects God as an outdated concept, advocates for spirituality through reason (like meditation), and insists morality stems from human well-being, not scripture, apparently ignoring the possibility that it is Atheism that has increasingly become an outdated concept these days as scientific evidence for *Intelligent Design,* day by day, becomes more increasingly evident.

One wonders where his magic "philosophical reason and morality" has had its origins in the first place.

In summary, they share a rejection of God due to lack of so-called "evidence" and a preference for reason over faith, but their styles differ, i.e., Russell's calm logic, Dawkins' scientific zeal, Hitchens' fiery rhetoric, Dennett's evolutionary lens, Nye's educational push, and Harris' blend of neuroscience and ethics. All see religion as optional at best, harmful at worst.

Ironically, it is strange that such gifted individuals, relishing their high education and basking in the sunlight of public admiration, can nevertheless be so belligerently dull-witted at the same time, totally dismissing the fact that scientists have already conceded that they know only about 5% of what is going on in the Cosmos, with the unexplained rest (95%) loosely defined as "dark matter" and "dark energy". So, how anyone so dismissive of the preponderance of information about the Cosmos (still so glaringly absent in science and academia) and still can be so cocksure of themselves boggles the rational, reasonable mind.

3. **THE THREE ATHEISMS.** Atheism comes in many multicolour hues. For the purpose of this book, however, I will focus on the three atheistic worldviews that in my opinion really matter. Most atheists will therefore probably find a niche in at least one of the following categories:

3.1 **No God.** These atheists believe that God does not exist, has never existed and will never exist. This Universe and everything inside it evolved from nothing by sheer random chance and coincidence. The Cosmos, and life in the Cosmos, is a pure accident. There is no God (except for the pagan god of Scientism).

3.2 **The God who died.** These atheists believe that God once may have existed, used to be alive but is now dead.

3.3 **God exists but is evil.** These atheists believe that God exists but is evil.

Do the math: It stands to reason that they cannot all three be right at the same time, i.e., some of them, or all of them are lying to us.

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4. **THE INVITATION STILL STANDS.** God's 'Water of Life' comes for free. Jesus has said:

> *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God draws near. Repent, and believe the gospel."*
>
> [Mark 1:15MKJV].

> *"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify these things to you over the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright and Morning Star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let the one hearing say, Come! And let the one who is thirsty come. And he willing, let him take of the Water of Life freely."*
>
> [Revelation 22:16-17MKJV].

5. **ARE TODAY'S ATHEISTS RELIABLE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATORS?** Someone recently hinted to the effect that Richard Dawkins was, a "great scientific communicator". Really? A man who once has intimated that "aliens from outer space" may possibly have populated the earth in the beginning? A man who, unethically and unscientifically, submits unfalsifiable, paleontologically driven data about fossils as hard "evidence" for Evolution? A man who says that there is no God and that that same God, who purportedly does not exist, is evil?

With his take on the origins of the Cosmos and the world at large, and judged from his typically juvenile understanding of and pronouncements about the Bible, God and Jesus Christ, Dawkins should rather consider joining and aligning himself with the 'Church of Scientology' *(sic).* They appear to (more or less) be talking the same outlandish language most of the time.

6. **CHRISTIANS DO NOT OWE ATHEISTS AN EXPLANATION.** Although Christians love to share their Christian testimony with anyone, including atheists, and love to speak up in defence of God, Jesus Christ, the Gospel and the Bible in the presence of sincere enquirers, they do not owe atheists an explanation, for it is not as if the Almighty God, Jesus Christ and the Bible would need any defence at all.

Christians are not the intellectual midwives for recalcitrant, obstinate (and often profane, vulgar and blasphemous) "new atheists" to help them magically birth a belief in God; Christians are basically only despatch riding dispensers and preachers of the Gospel.

Technically speaking, no person on earth has the right to hear the Gospel twice until everyone on earth had heard it at least once. It is only because of the magnanimity of Christians and perhaps their (convenient) proximity to atheists, that they tolerate the atheist so patiently day in and day out, for the simple reason that Jesus Christ are so incredibly patient with us as believers; and since most earthlings are anyway too remotely removed from us for most of us to effectively reach in time.

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7. **WRESTLING WITH GOD.** Many, if not most, Christians have themselves probably been personally wrestling with God on their own terms, and, have had to come to a faith in and knowledge of God personally through many long years and nights of personal fears, tears, intercessory prayer and struggle.

Here's the deal: A comprehended God is no God, and the Bible teaches that those who come to God must come to Him in faith and personal, experiential trials over the entire course of life. Do the math: If God (YHWH) could be intellectually fully comprehended at all by mortal man, He would not be God, but an imposter.

As alluded to before, it is *faith* that unlocks understanding, not "evidence"; there is no way a finite mortal being will ever be able to trace and find an infinite God purely empirically, mechanically or physically by means of telescopes, microscopes, spectroscopes and stethoscopes. One would, for instance, never search for and find Henry Ford in the engine of a Ford automobile. Besides, God may be obscured from our view and observations in the 95% of the Cosmos we all still know nothing about. Here is a handy hint:

> *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."*
> [Jesus Christ, Matthew5:8MKJV].

Atheists must learn to stop arguing, debating and rabble rousing Christians; instead, they should instead begin to wrestle with God themselves, and stop making their emotional insecurities, intellectual procrastinations and cynical obfuscations the emergency of Christians.

Many of the "new atheists" (no names, no pack-drill) that I encounter (especially on YouTube and the Internet in general) are not really, honestly, seeking divine truth; they are, on the contrary, a quarrelsome, bickering and argumentative contingent of time-wasting, obstinate belligerents, gripers and malcontents. To such I will not speak, except perhaps for a mild rebuke.

The place to start in the quest for truth is through humbly reading the Bible and, of course, through prayer, and the first station of action is not to challenge the nearest bystander at the bus stop or in place of employment, on the 'existence of God', but to challenge God directly on His existence Himself. Job has asked:

> *"Can you by searching find out God? Can you perfectly find out the Almighty?"*
> [Job11:7MKJV].

Since God is the Highest Authority in the Cosmos, the atheist's only hope is to appeal to God … against God. Only after the atheist has proved the so-called "non-existence of God" successfully to God Himself, should atheists approach Christians with such information, and, of course, with the evidence for it.

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So, Mr. Atheist, don't appeal to us Christians against God; you're barking up the wrong tree. Appeal to God against God; we not only believe that God exists … we know tat He exists (and we marvel and shudder). Look to God Himself.

8. **THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.** Proving to atheists the existence of God is not the Christians' duty; every born-again Christian has probably had to prove the existence of God for himself/herself many times over, and, it probably always was/is a very personal struggle, in many cases probably one of quite epic proportions.

So, as alluded to before, the atheists should stop making their lack of vigorous Biblical study, moral virility, intellectual stamina and transcendent spiritual curiosity (a trait of just about every human being ever created) the final emergency of Christians.

I repeat: Christians are, at best, despatch-riding messengers of the Gospel, and not the intellectual midwives, curators and babysitters of profane, banal, griping, complaining and blaspheming atheists. Here's the deal:

8.1 **Atheists should display more initiative.** Atheists will have to learn to grasp the bull by the horns by themselves, wrestle with God on a personal level the way Jacob did and prove or disprove His existence or non-existence for themselves. As alluded to before, is the atheists' greatest challenge not to prove to Christians that God does not exist; their first and foremost challenge is to prove to God Himself that He does not exist. Only once they have persuaded Him that He does not exist, will they have deserved the right to try and prove to Christians that God does not exist.

Christians are not the ones with the 'God-problem'; on the contrary, they have long since come to not only believe that God exists, but also to know, by His grace, that He exists. The atheists are the ones with the problem, and a good dose of old-fashioned humility will probably go a long way to resolving that issue for them.

Atheists have a fiduciary duty to themselves to prove the existence of God by themselves and for themselves, since they are the ones with the problem, not the Christians. Even though it may be an epic struggle and a formidable challenge, just draw near unto God and, in time, He will draw near unto you, since most of us have had to travel that route ourselves. William Cowper (1731-1800) has written,

> *"God moves in many a mysterious way His wonders to perform; He plants His footprint in the sea and rides upon the storm".*

8.2 **Christians do not have a monopoly on the Gospel.** Furthermore, Christians do not have a monopoly on the Gospel, or, on the grace of God. The Gospel is not a 'club' only for Christians. God is Sovereign and will have mercy upon whom He wishes to have mercy, and, will have compassion on whom He wishes to have compassion. Try to remember the kind, empathic evildoer on the cross, and the compassion with which

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Christ responded to Him at the slightest hint of the evildoer's own compassionate (otherwise revolting, criminal) humanity.

As Christians, we are not called to be intellectual prima donnas pretending to know everything ... we don't. It is for the very reason that we do not know everything that we kneel and submit to the divine superiority of the knowledge, discretion and wisdom of the YHWH, or 'I Am'', of Moses and Mt. Sinai, and Commander of Heaven and Israel's Armies.

The Bible teaches that without faith it is impossible to please God, and, that God is a Rewarder of those who believe that He IS (exists) and diligently seek Him. With an assumed I.Q. (Intelligence Quotient) of INFINITY to the power of INFINITY, surely He (Jehovah-Jireh) must have a better chance of guiding and navigating us through the rough patches of life on this here lonely little planet in the outposts of the Milky Way Galaxy. To echo Rick Warren, we'd rather walk alone with Jesus Christ with all our questions than walk with Satan with all the "answers".

All we have to do is to simply repent and believe the Gospel and, like the prodigal son of old, rise up and return to the waiting Father in Heaven. [Mark 1:15; John 3:16-17; John 1:12; Romans 6:23; Revelation Chapter 22).

9. THE UNHAPPY ATHEIST TEMPERAMENT.

9.1 **The Atheists' 'ABC Syndrome'.** Be honest ... have you ever seen or met a happy, fulfilled, buoyantly cheerful atheist? I haven't, and why are we not surprised; why would anyone subscribing to the death-cult of Atheism-Evolutionism be particularly cheerful? Why would anyone preaching the morbid, depressing religious cult of death-after-death (the new "Dead Poets Society"?) want to be cheerful? Lecturing and writing on such a hopeless cause so devoid of meaning and purpose surely must be debilitatingly, demoralizingly painful and depressing.

By and large, the image of the average atheist, for me, usually conveys the impression of (at best), continual sadness and despondency, or (at worst) extreme anger, bitterness and cynicism, hence the coining of the phrase, *"The Atheist's ABC Syndrome" (Always Angry, Bitter & Cynical).* The reason for that probably is because true, lasting peace and joy, especially amidst challenging and trying circumstances, are probably impossible and unlikely without God, the *Author of Life.*

9.2 **Atheism as a Death-Cult.** Take the career of the palaeontologist and the museum curator: Is it really possible to work with the dead remains and unsanitary bones of deceased animals and humans year in and year out without getting depressed? How much does the job of the natural history museum curator and palaeontologist really differ from that of the funeral undertaker who stolidly must breathe the dank atmosphere of

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mortuaries on a depressingly regular basis? Both these categories of men and/or women work with the dead (almost) every day of their lives ... surely it cannot be very cheerful or gratifying to be reminded of death every waking hour of the day?

Fortunately, the undertaker is rendering an important service to his/her fellow citizens, which certainly can produce a substantial degree of career gratification, especially for a funeral really tastefully done. But, as far as I am concerned, the palaeontologist is, instead of forever trying to prove 'Evolution' with his excavation of fossils and fossil fragments, only serving to prove the fact of the historicity of the Bible and the authenticity of the Genesis Creation Account, since creationists believe that fossils, instead of proving Darwinian Evolution, actually are proving the historical fact of the Biblical Flood of Noah's day when the dead remains of animals and people were suddenly, during that catastrophic deluge, laid down en masse worldwide in sediment to be fossilized; research is showing this up increasingly day by day.

9.3 **The Testimony of Jesus Christ.** Jesus Christ, who never lied, has said this about the Second Coming:

> "*But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not the angels of Heaven, but only My Father. But as the days of NOAH were, so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in the days before the FLOOD, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day NOAH entered into the ARK. And they did not know until the FLOOD came and took them all away. So also will be the coming of the Son of Man.*"
>
> [Matthew24:36-39MKJV].
> (CAPITALS MINE FOR EMPHASIS).

How anyone, especially a (postmodernist) "Christian", can still walk around and say that the Biblical Flood and Ark story is an old, obsolete Jewish myth not to be taken seriously, boggles the mind. Had Jesus Christ never affirmed the historicity of the Genesis Creation Account, there may still have been grounds for doubt among some about the authenticity of the Biblical Flood account, but, since Jesus Christ has personally affirmed the fact of the Flood, that fact has been burned into the solid 'Granite' of Biblical History forever, i.e., as God's prima facie, archaeological, geological evidence for the historical Flood of Noah. Jesus Christ has said it, I believe it … and that settles it.

10. ATHEIST DELUSIONS.

10.1 **The strangest things.** Atheists do the strangest things. For instance, they are always either (i) complaining about life, badmouthing God, denigrating the Bible and insulting Christians, or (ii) trying to convert the public at large to their own brand of religion (belief system) of Atheism,

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founded most of the time and in most cases on their replacement 'troika god' (in the place of the Holy Trinity) of Father TIME (for "Billions of Years"), Mother NATURE (for "Survival of the Fittest") and, as first introduced in the popular press by their de facto messiah, Charles DARWIN.

Dawkins complains that Christianity is "obsessed with sin". That is wrong … Christianity is obsessed with love ("For God so *loved* the world …"). Only an atheist (or people in general) with a guilt complex and who do not understand the Gospel, will insist that Christianity is obsessed with sin; only Christians saved by Grace will insist that Christianity is obsessed with love.

Now, I have said it before and must reiterate: I get the impression that not all atheists necessarily suffer from 'Atheism' per se, but rather from some peculiar strain of mental depression, hence our referring to the atheists' classical "ABC Syndrome", i.e., always Angry, Bitter and Cynical, over time manifesting in many, multitudinous and multiplicities of ways as e.g., banality, vulgarity, profanity and, in some cases, even blasphemy.

10.2 **The ultimate irony.** This is the phenomenon where the atheists (i) are always criticizing and insulting God (e.g., like Dawkins) for the brute He allegedly is and for messing up Creation and everything else wrong with the world, while, at the same time, (ii) were they to be asked who created the Cosmos, they would probably retort with, *"Evolution created the world through the Big Bang when 'Nothing' exploded!"*

This is the irony: They complain about God for messing up Creation and for everything that is wrong with the world, but, when asked who created the world, they insist that 'Evolution' created the world; wouldn't the logical thing to do rather have been to blame Evolution for messing up its own (so-called) "Progressive Evolution" and everything that is wrong with the world? If Evolution created and messed up the world, why are they blaming God for it? Do they believe in God after all?

Satirically speaking, if the explosion of 'Nothing' 'anyway could have created such a majestic, orderly and magnificent (intelligently designed!) Cosmos as the atheists and evolutionists would want us to believe, imagine what would happen the day 'Something' were to decide to explode.

11. **WHY ATHEISTS ARE STRUGGLING TO FIND GOD.** Atheists could, in principle, not only find God but also know that He exists if only they followed the prompts and cues that the Bible has provided; what is the use of being a guru with I.T. systems, AI, super-computers and Smartphones, but a complete novice or dunce, with the greatest Book (Manual for Life) in the world ever written? To see or experience God, the Bible (still the bestselling book of all time) teaches:

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11.1 **We must be pure of heart.**

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!"
[Matthew 5:8MKJV].

11.2 **We must ask.**

"And I say to you, Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened to you."
[Luke11:9MKJV].

11.3 **We must be born again.**

"Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
[John 3:3MKJV].

11.4 **We must accept Christ.**

"But as many as received Him [JESUS], He gave to them authority to become the children of God, to those who believe on His name."
[John1:12MKJV].

12. **DEBRIEFING.** Do the math:

12.1 How can the atheist ever be pure in heart when he is walking around all day long insulting and blaspheming God, the Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ? What kind of God would want to talk to such an ingrate of a Neanderthalian brute?

12.2 How can the atheist expect anything from God if he, over and above insulting and blaspheming God, refuses to pray and ask something from God? This "ASK", by the way, is one of the most potent acronyms ever devised by the Saviour, Jesus Christ:

A = Ask (and it shall be given unto you)
S = Seek (and ye shall find)
K = Knock (and it shall be opened unto you)

Yet, people will rather go to listen to what a "famous atheist" has to say (whose knowledge is, according to scientific consensus, founded on only about 5% maximum of all there is to know about the Cosmos) than take the advice of God (who knows 100% of what there is to know about the Cosmos + Extra) to pray and ask Him for wisdom.

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"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

[Job28:28].

12.3 How can the atheist be born again when he refuses to accept Christ so that he can become a child of God? Bear in mind that the Bible teaches that all men i.e., all people, are created by God but that not all people are children of God. We become a child of God when we accept Christ as Lord and Saviour of the world, and as Messiah of the Jews (John1:12).

P.S. For antisemites, I must reiterate: Jesus Christ has not only (i) created the Cosmos (Hebrews1:1-4), and (ii) will sit as Chief Justice presiding at the Great White Throne Judgment, but (iii) has also solemnly declared: "*Salvation is of the Jews"* (whether we like it or not).

13. **QUESTIONS SCIENCE, SCIENTISTS AND PSEUDO-SCIENTISTS CANNOT ANSWER.** Outside the ambit of Biblical revelation, real scientists and pseudo-scientists (e.g., evolutionists) cannot answer questions such as the examples below. Bear in mind that it is not an exhaustive list, only a sample:

13.1 **Why is there SOMETHING instead of NOTHING?** Why is there a Cosmos, i.e., galaxy clusters, galaxies, stars, solar systems, planets & moons, etc., at all? Some may now object and say that it is an unfair, philosophical question, which is untrue ... it is just as much a scientific question as it is a philosophical one.

If dumb, brainless "Evolution" really created the world, what was the reason or cause for it? The best answer someone has ever managed to come up with, i.e., satirically speaking, was that, had there really been NOTHING instead of SOMETHING, how on earth would people have been able to ask the question, "*Why is there nothing instead of something?"*

13.2 **WHERE do we come from?** If "Evolution" created the Big Bang and the Big Bang created the Cosmos, what or who created Evolution in the first place (and why?). Bear in mind that Harvard Cosmologists have conceded that humans will probably never be able to answer this question; so, are atheists smarter than Harvard Cosmologists?

13.3 **WHY are we here?** Why are we here, and why was it expedient for (so-called, brainless, dumb) "Evolution" to (allegedly) have created a species such as ours ... to kill unborn children en masse, prove that men can give birth and that biological men should be allowed to compete against (real) women in sports? If we are born only to kill unborn children en masse, why would we anyway need an extra gender to give birth to babies that are also anyway going to be aborted? Why exacerbate

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the problem by (theoretically) adding an extra "birthing father" ... are we not killing enough?

13.4 **WHERE are we going?** To Mars? Is life on earth (and in the Universe) really the "End Game" as the atheists would want us to believe? And, if that really is what the atheists "believe", why are we not allowed to insist that Atheism is a religion ("belief system"), and not a "Science"?

13.5 **Is there HOPE for Planet Earth?** Apparently not, because everybody wants to "emigrate" to Mars. They think that there is no hope for planet Earth and therefore want to emigrate to Mars; the irony is that, were they really to emigrate to Mars, *then* there would be no hope for planet earth. Leftists do things wrong way around.

13.6 **Is there HOPE for the human race?** Apparently not, for, according to the Leftists, there either are no genders at all, or there are 50+ genders (now apparently already 72 genders), and unborn children should be aborted anyway. So, according to their "philosophy", the human race must be engineered into extinction (Incidentally, in rational societies and communities this is referred to as a "death cult").

How killing babies (to reduce the population and stem population growth) and importing illegal aliens together make sense in Leftist mathematics boggles the mind. Could it be that babies are being killed to make space for the illegal aliens?

13.7 **How can we distinguish between RIGHT and WRONG?** In Leftist philosophy this distinction (and hence, this challenge) will not be necessary, since there are no such things as good and evil ... only, *"the thinking that makes it so"*. Everything is "relative" ("Moral Relativism & Situational Ethics"), making one wonder: If everything were really relative and there really were no such things as good and evil, why would they need Leftist Policing (ACLU etc.) schools to prevent parents from bringing the Bible and prayer back into public schools?

If there really were no such things as good and evil, why do Leftists insist that the striking down of the (1973) *Roe vs. Wade* legislation in 2022 was "unfair" (i.e., wrong)?

14. **THE BIBLE THE ONLY RELIABLE MORAL COMPASS.** What do atheists recommend as their de facto moral compass of choice:

- *Little Red Book?* (Mao)
- *Mein Kampf?* (Adolf Hitler)
- *Dianetics?* (L. Ron Hubbard)i
- *The Book of Mormon?* (Joseph Smith)
- *The New World Translation of the Bible?*

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- *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion?*
- The World Transformation Movement's *Human Condition'?*
- Darwin's *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life?*

P.S. Notice the racist slur, "*Preservation of Favoured Races*", in the title of Darwin's 1859 book. Jesus Christ has promised:

> *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."*
>
> [Matthew24:35KJV].

15. **DO THE MATH ... IF YOU CAN.** How long does the reader think will it take the average person to (off the cuff) calculate the answer to the following math problem, i.e., without the aid of a *Frontier* supercomputer, a maths-calculator or any technological, super-calculating device?

$$\frac{987654321^{123456789}}{123456789^{987654321}}$$

Be that as it may, how long do people think it would take the God of Moses (YHWH) to calculate the answer to the same maths problem: 24 hours? 12 hours? 2 hours? 1 hour? 30 minutes? 15 minutes? 1 minute? 60 zepto-seconds? 30 zepto-seconds? 1 zepto-second?

God exists independently of time, space and matter as we know it. Any reply by the reader given in some kind of time-lapse will be the incorrect answer, since God will not need time to calculate the answer; He will know the answer by default the way we instinctively know that 1 + 1 = 2 without even having to calculate it.

Even were we to imagine any conceivable or even inconceivable of the most complex and difficult maths problems in the Cosmos; God would probably know all the answers automatically by default and instantly without ever having to calculate it. He knows all the answers to all the maths problems in the Cosmos automatically by default, the way we e.g., know that grass is green, the sky is blue, and clouds are white.

Furthermore does He not only have the capacity and ability to "calculate" (know) the answer to any imaginable maths-problem; He even is capable of calculating the answer to any maths-problem that we are not even capable of imagining. The Bible teaches that God can even do *far above that which we may ever dare to think or ask.* There is not an imagination on earth alive to 'out-imagine' what God is capable of doing. In other words, God is able to do things and solve problems we cannot even as much as imagine to exist. The mind of God is infinite, and the Bible teaches:

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> *"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite."*
>
> [Psalm 145:5MKJV].

It thus stands to reason that we can safely assert that God's I.Q. (Intelligence Quotient), philosophically speaking, probably is in the region of INFINITY to the power of INFINITY.

Now, imagine the average Christian or atheist trying to pit his or her intellect (with an I.Q. of say, anything between 100 and 180) against that of God ... wouldn't it be plum silly? Bear in mind that the distance between the mind of God and that of the most intelligent of men, say a 'Goethe', with his reported I.Q. of 210, is far greater than the distance between the mind of, for instance, a fruit fly and that of man, whether a Christian or an atheist. No one would recommend for a fruit fly to debate Albert Einstein, would he? Yet, atheists want to pit their mind against that of God, and what impertinence.

The average person (of whatever persuasion) would not, off the cuff, even be able to explain the proper chemical analysis for the contents in a heap of cow dung, yet we want to explain to the public at large the history, origins, dynamics and mysteries of the entire Cosmos founded on (according to scientists) only 5% knowledge of what is going on in the Cosmos?

I used to have a friend, now deceased, who once told me (my paraphrasing):

> *"It is impossible and futile to describe the majesty, power, glory and greatness of God ... when trying to do that, the moment you open your mouth, even after the very first sentence, you have already begun to insult Him."*

Our inadequacies are exquisitely apparent, our superficialities and ignorance clearly equally exquisitely deep.

Humility is a precious character trait, and, while the Bible teaches that pride and haughtiness come before the fall, it also teaches that humility has a great reward; that is why Christians can marvel at the wonder, magnificence and majesty of the Cosmos so cheerfully despite the current problems and challenges they face, the consequences of the fall of man in Eden.

They have simply decided to take the Word of God in the good faith (like a little child) with the understanding that He probably is the only Persona in (or outside of) the Cosmos with the moral status and scientific gravitas to explain the world to ordinary people on earth; and, He has been doing exactly that for millennia without fail.

Because atheists have convinced themselves that this world is the "End Game", i.e., with no Hereafter, they are losing out big time for dismissing God as a myth and/or insulting and denigrating Him as either "dead", "evil" or "cruel".

Had the science community at large remained humble instead and not wasted their time (165 years?) with the pseudo-scientific, religious cult of defunct Evolutionism, the world probably would have been "driving" (not

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"flying") around in the sky in colourful, driverless sky-cars and sky-busses by now, with gigantic, GPS-controlled hologram images for "traffic-signs" controlling the traffic ... all powered by forces from Einstein's *Unified Field Theory,* or something even more grand.

16. **STRANGE BEDFELLOWS.** Just imagine:

- Demons and terrorist revile Jews, Christians, the Synagogue/Church and the Bible ... *and so do atheists.*

- Demons and terrorists revile the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus Christ ... *and so do atheists.*

- Demons and terrorists revile/reject God and Jesus Christ ... *and so do atheists.*

- Demons and terrorists refuse to read/cherish/believe the Bible ... *and so do atheists.*

So, why do atheists prefer to (ideologically speaking) rather take hands with and be on the side of terrorists, than take hands with or be on the side of Christians? Is that the reason why the Bible refers to atheists as, "the wicked and the ungodly"? Richard Dawkins must have realised the terrible dilemma he is putting atheists in, hence his latest backtracking in favour of "Cultural Christianity". Thanks Professor Dawkins ... much appreciated.

Science can, on the one hand, be a brilliant and useful servant (as modern technology and conveniences clearly have proved) but, on the other hand, a bad and brutal master (as the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki etc. have proved).

The Christian's attitude is that Science should be treated as a servant, whereas atheists, by and large, appear to have assumed that Science should be "worshipped" (revered), hence the word, 'Scientism':

> *"SCIENTISM: An exaggerated trust in the efficacy of the methods of natural science applied to all areas of investigation, as in philosophy, the social sciences, and the humanities."*
>
> [Merriam-Webster].

Apart from being brutal, Science can also be pretty useless sometimes. I have already lost about a dozen family members or friends in our extended circle to cancer, which makes me marvel at the atheists exaggerated, almost childish, trust in Science. For instance, Science has proved itself totally at loss (outside the ambit of Biblical revelation) to provide coherent, logical and/or useful answers to the most critical of questions humans (including some brilliant academics and scientists) today love to ask, etc. (as alluded to earlier):

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- Why is there something instead of nothing?

- Where do we come from?

- Why are we here?

- Where are we going?

- Is there hope for planet earth?

- Is there hope for the human race?

- How can we know right from wrong?

17. **ATHEISM: THE CAUSE WITHOUT A PURPOSE.** The 'House of Atheism' is crumbling at its foundations; it is falling apart, and why are not surprised ... a house divided against itself shall never stand. Unless Atheism gets its house in order, no Christian worth his salt will ever be seriously interested in everything that atheists may have to say.

Atheism actually has become the new *Dead Poets Society* of the 21st Century, and no wonder Richard Dawkins refers to his toxic brand of Atheism as "the poetry of reality". For instance, if the atheist's brain really had, by his own admission, 'evolved' *(sic)* from the brain of a monkey-like *hominid* as the atheists would want us to believe, why would any rational, especially educated and God-fearing, Christian want to trust the opinions, pronouncements and harebrained ideas of such a brain?

My advice to young kids? Never speak to strangers, men wearing dresses and people who believe in the morbid religious cult of death-after-death (Atheism). Even were the atheists right (which they aren't), why would anyone still want to teach, preach and lecture on such a hopeless, depressing anti-gospel of bad news? In that case, why not just sit back and observe the world going to pot? Why waste time, energy, labour, money and thought on a cause without a purpose?

18. **ENTERS THE 'CULTURAL' CHRISTIAN.** Leo Tolstoy is reported to have said that man is at his nearest to God when he is in trouble. Another wise man has (satirically) remarked that, every time when flying, at the very moment the plane hits turbulence he can literally feel the "Atheism" leaving his body!

The fact is, when faced by the terror of the unknown or by some great catastrophe, man usually instinctively turns to God, whether he is an atheist or Christian or not. Even that prolific doyen of the death-cult of Atheism-Evolutionism, Richard Dawkins, has recently ideologically capitulated by gravitating back to "cultural Christianity".

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The spectre of imminent death is an ever-present menace to all of us: Young people *can* die; old people *must* die. The mortality rate for humankind is still 100% for all nations, and every single one of us will yet die of something, no matter how carefully and faithfully we select our amino acids and vitamins, or whether we are "vaccinated" or not.

Commenting on the antisocial brutality and destructiveness of Islamic terrorism, Dawkins, apparently fazed and in considerable distress, recently issued a statement to the public at large to the effect that he now identifies as "cultural Christian". Fear can make some people do the weirdest of (correct) things sometimes, and, no wonder, for even a stopped clock can be still 100% accurate at least twice a day.

19. **THE ATHEIST AND INTELLIGENT DESIGN.** Evidence for the existence of God is all over the Cosmos and our planet; those who cannot see evidence for God and an Intelligent Designer in the Universe are either being disingenuously spiteful or maliciously insincere. The problem with the atheist is that he/she expects to "see" (evidence for) God while, at the same time, badmouthing and insulting God all day long, and that while Jesus Christ has said:

> *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God ... Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."*
> [Beatitudes, Matthew Chapter 5].

So, how the atheist expects to discover God following that obnoxious route boggles the mind. The Bible teaches that God gives grace to the humble but resists the proud. Pride ('haughtiness') comes before the fall.

The bitter (and amusing) irony is that atheists, although they claim to not believe in *intelligent design* (the assumed product of an Intelligent Designer) have become consummate specialists in intelligent design themselves. For instance, despite dismissing the idea of intelligent design, the atheist will nevertheless not object to:

- Using the tools and disciplines of academia and intelligent design in his science or craft, e.g., mathematics, astronomy, astrophysics, biochemistry, biology, physics etc. and all the trappings of academia's research facilities and state-of-the-art labs, theses, dissertations, encyclopaedias, textbooks, science journals, articles, pamphlets, newsletters, printing machines, legacy media & social media platforms etc.

- Spectroscopes, telescopes (optical), microscopes, stethoscopes, slide-rules, computers, scientific calculators, cell phones & cell phone chargers, microphones, lecterns, lecture rooms, museums, fossil & archaeological exhibits, the instruments of scientific excavation, geology, chemistry, spectroscopy, radio-telescopes, satellites, space-stations, GPS, telephones, radio, television, e-mail, fax machines & electronic fax-facilities, Internet

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(websites, blogs, vlogs, podcasts etc.), research grants, airplanes, trains, buses, cars, motorcycles, bicycles, boats, canoes, electricity, flash drives, cameras, wireless data etc.

Despite all of this activity and investment in the tools, materials and disciplines of intelligent design, the atheist will then still go ahead to unethically submit unfalsifiable data as so-called "evidence" for his/her favourite religion-of-choice, i.e., Darwinism. For instance:

- **Stellar Evolution.** No one can go back "billions of years" into the past to go and verify and validate the outrageous claims of evolutionists about the age of the Cosmos; evolutionists expect from us to accept their word in "good faith" (!).

- **Geological Evolution.** No one can go back "billions or millions of years" into the past to go and verify and validate the outrageous claims of evolutionists about the age of the earth or of geological strata. Again we are expected to accept their word in "good faith".

- **Biological Evolution.** No one can go back "millions of years" into the past to go and verify and validate the outrageous claims of evolutionists/palaeontologists about the age of fossils. With such a strong emphasis on the value of the "scientific method", "empirical evidence" and the utility value of Academia and Science, we stand amazed at the atheists' habit of submitting unverifiable, unvalidated, unfalsifiable data and information as evidence for Evolution and for Atheism.

There is no way we will accept their brand of "Science" simply in "good faith". Real Science demands verifiable, falsifiable evidence as proof. The ultimate irony was, once when I asked an evolutionist why they were doing something so contrary to real Science, he nonchalantly replied: "*We falsify our evidence theoretically!*" (I rest my case).

Be that as it may, the old song still goes, "*Glory, glory hallelujah ... His truth is marching on!*" Christians are still preaching the Gospel all over the world, despite the objecting, the moaning, the anger, the bitterness and the cynicism from the agents of unbelief. In a lighter vein:

> *"The hounds of Bashan bark, but this great Gospel caravan just keeps rolling merrily along, century after century after century!"*

20. I.Q. TEST FOR THE SMARTEST.

20.1 **I.Q. (Intelligence Quotient) Test only for the Smartest.** How omnipotent (almighty) is the God of the Bible (YHWH) really ... omnipotent enough to have created the Cosmos in "13.8 billion years" *(sic)* but not omnipotent enough to have created the world in six

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ordinary weekdays of 24 hours each? What kind of "omnipotence" would that be? So, how omnipotent is God really? (You choose):

God is:

- ☐ Absolutely & Infinitely omnipotent!
- ☐ Almost Absolutely & Infinitely omnipotent!
- ☐ Very omnipotent!
- ☐ Just a little bit omnipotent!
- ☐ Not omnipotent at all!

20.2 **BIBLE.** In the Bible, God speaks:

> *"I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded ... For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: 'I am the LORD; and there is none else'."*
>
> [Isaiah 45:12, 18KJV].

> *"Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."*
>
> [Job42:1-2KJV].

> *"And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."*
>
> [Mark10:27KJV].

21. **WHY ROLLING STONE MAGAZINE ATTACKS CHRISTIANS.** Rolling Stone Magazine's recent vitriolic attack on a well-known Christian public figure came as no surprise; they are following the same yellow brick road as all secular humanists usually or eventually will do, i.e., away from Judeo-Christian values to today's boring, gaudy, morbid and confused 'WOKE Inc." driven apostasy. Like their Siamese twins, the atheists, the staff from Rolling Stone Magazine apparently do not support our time-tested Judeo-Christian values any longer, but exactly the opposite.

Do the math: If a person is not pro-Christ (with the good news Gospel as the THESIS), he is obviously Anti-Christ (with the bad news of Leftism as the ANTITHESIS); there are no demilitarized zones in the war of ideas. Jesus Christ has warned:

> *"Those who are not for me, are against me."*

Just as reminder, secular humanists, postmodernists and atheists for instance:

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- do not believe in Absolute Truth (like God, the paragon of Absolute Truth and Biblical values), except for the absolute truth of secular humanism, postmodernism and Leftist driven Wokeism; belief-systems ("religions") they tout with a religious fervour that probably would shame many an indolent Christian.

- do not believe in intolerance, except of course for their own intolerance of "intolerant" Christians and Orthodox and Messianic Jews.

Of course there are exceptions, just as their are bad apples among Christians and Jews. But, by and large, atheists and secular humanists (i.e., in the popular vernacular, "Leftists") can (and I repeat) usually be recognised by the acronym ABC, or the by the term, "The ABC Syndrome".

As alluded to before, this strange phenomenon may often be observed in their demeanour, the written language or in public speech, i.e., usually Angry, Bitter and Cynical, of whom Bart Ehrman, Richard Dawkins, Bill Nye (and the late Bertrand Russell and Christopher Hitchens) probably are/were the most prolific of well-known exponents. Jesus has taught:

> *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth; blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."*
>
> [Matthew Chapter. 5].

22. **GIFTS THE ATHEISTS HAVE REJECTED.** When the atheists decided to choose death and not life (by refusing to make their peace with GOD) they, for all intents and purposes, have declined a cornucopia of precious GIFTS that all the money in the world will never be able to buy.

Some examples:

22.1 The FORGIVENESS of SIN [Isaiah 1:18; 1 John 1:7; John 3:16; Romans 6:23; 8:1].

22.2 The gift of ETERNAL LIFE [John 3:16; Romans 6:23; John Chptr.17].

22.3 The gift of GRACE [Ephesians 4:7].

22.4 The gift of RIGHTEOUSNESS [Romans 5:17].

22.5 The gift of FAITH [Ephesians 2:8].

22.6 The gift of the HOLY SPIRIT [Acts 2:38].

22.7 The SPIRITUAL GIFTS [1 Corinthians Chapter 12].

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a. A word of WISDOM [1Cor.12:8a].
b. A word of KNOWLEDGE [1Cor.12:8b].
c. A word of FAITH [1Cor.12:9a].
d. Gifts of HEALING [1Cor.12:9b].
e. Gift of WORKING of POWERS [1Cor.12:10a].
f. Gifts of PROPHECY [1 Cor.12:10b].
g. Gift of DISCERNING of SPIRITS [1Cor.12:10c].
h. Gift of TONGUES and INTERPRETATION of TONGUES [1Cor12:10d].

22.8 The gift of GOOD THINGS [Matthew 7:11].

22.9 The gift of a MANSION in the *Father's House of Many Mansions* [John 14:2].

22.10 The gift of BEAUTY for ashes [Isaiah 61:3a].

22.11 The gift of the OIL of JOY for mourning [Isaiah 61:3b].

22.12 The gift of the MANTLE (GARMENT) of PRAISE for the spirit of heaviness [Isaiah 61:3c].

22.13 The gifts of the WATER OF LIFE and the TREE OF LIFE:

> *"And he showed me a pure river of Water of Life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*
> *In the midst of its street, and of the river, from here and from there, was the Tree of Life, which bore twelve fruits, each yielding its fruit according to one month. And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."*
>
> [Revelation 22:1-2].

23. **HOPE FOR ATHEISTS.** Twelve propositions of note to prove that there is hope for repentant atheists:

23.1 **Proposition #1. God wants everybody to be saved.**

> *"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."*
>
> [1Timothy2:3-4MKJV].

23.2 **Proposition #2. God invites even the atheists to come to Him today for Salvation.**

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"Come now, and let us reason together, says Jehovah; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool."

[Isaiah1:18].

23.3 **Proposition #3. God has the right to show mercy to whom He wants to show mercy.**

"And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.

[Exodus33:19b].

23.4 **Proposition #4. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.**

"But He gives more grace. There-fore He says, God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble."

[James4:6].

23.5 **Proposition #5. The wages of sin is death.**

"For the wages of sin is death …"

[Romans6:23a].

23.6 **Proposition #6. All men ('people') have sinned.**

"…for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

[Romans3:23].

23.7 **Proposition #7. The Gift of God is Everlasting Life through Jesus Christ our LORD.**

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

[Romans6:23].

23.8 **Proposition #8. Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners.**

"Faithful is the Word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners … "

[1Timothy:15a].

23.9 **Proposition #9. God did not send Jesus Christ to condemn the world.**

"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him."

[John3:17].

23.10 **Proposition #10. Jesus Christ is the only Name by which the world can be saved.**

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"And there is salvation in no other One; for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
[Acts4:12].

23.11 Proposition #11. If atheists were to confess the Name of Jesus Christ they would also be saved.

"Because if you confess the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."
[Romans10:9].

23.12 Proposition #12. There is joy in Heaven over one sinner (including the atheist) who repents.

"Likewise I say to you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."
[Luke15:10].

The Touch of the Master's Hand

(Myra Brooks Welch, 1878-1959)

'Twas battered and scarred and the auctioneer thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin, but he held it up with a smile.

"What am I bid, good folk?" he cried. *"Who'll start the bidding for me?*
A dollar, a dollar … now two … only two … Two dollars, and who'll make it three?
"Three dollars once, three dollars twice, Going for three" … but no!

From the room far back a gray-haired man came forward and picked up the bow.
Then wiping the dust from the old violin and tightening up the strings, he played a melody pure and sweet,
As sweet as an angel sings.
The music ceased, and the auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low,
Said,

"What am I bid for the old violin?" As he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars … and who'll make it two? Two…two thousand, and who'll make it three?
Three thousand once and three thousand twice;
Three thousand and gone!" said he.
The people cheered, but some of them cried
"We do not quite understand … What changed it's worth?" Swift came the reply:
" 'Twas the touch of the master's hand."

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And many a man with soul out of tune and battered and scarred by sin, is auctioned cheap by the thoughtless crowd just like the old violin.
A mess of pottage, a glass of wine; a game, and he travels on.
He is 'going once', and 'going twice', He's 'going' and almost 'gone'.
But the Master comes and the foolish crowd never can quite understand,
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought ...
By the touch of the Master's Hand!

"It is done. I am the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who thirsts I will give of the fountain of the Water of Life freely."

[Revelation 21:6bMKJV].

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Chapter 2

A CLASH OF FOUR CIVILISATIONS

If you are not prepared to use force to defend civilization, then be prepared to accept barbarism.
(Thomas Sowell,
b.1930)

The world at large appears to be currently entertaining the ideological clash of four major 'civilisations' (worldviews), i.e., *Evangelical Christianity* (founded on Judaism and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, i.e., Judeo-Christian values); *Marxism-Socialism, Darwinism (Atheism)* and *Islamic Jihadism*. Everywhere we look we see these ideologies, worldviews and forces increasingly competing for dominance … the final *Great War of Ideas* have at last arrived in all its magnificent, illustrious, horrific and gory glory.

1. **EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY.** Evangelical Christianity is a Protestant movement rooted in the foundational traditions of Judaism and the Gospel and teachings of Jesus Christ as presented in the New Testament.

It emphasizes a personal, transformative relationship with God through faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Savior, who, according to Christian belief, fulfilled Jewish prophecies about redemption and atonement for humanity's sins.

Building on Judaism's monotheism, moral law (e.g., the *Ten Commandments)*, and covenantal relationship with God, Evangelicals see Jesus' life, death, and resurrection as the central events that establish a new covenant, open to all people, not just the Jewish nation. In broad terms, Evangelicalism stresses four key pillars:

1.1 **Biblicism.** The Bible, comprising the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible, Jewish Scriptures) and the New Testament, is the ultimate authority, divinely inspired, and infallible in guiding faith and practice.

1.2 **Cruci-centrism.** The cross, where Jesus' sacrificial death atones for human sin, is the heart of salvation, echoing Jewish sacrificial traditions but reinterpreted as a final, universal offering.

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1.3 **Conversionism (Repentance).** Individuals must experience spiritual regeneration, i.e., a personal "born-again" moment, after having believed the Gospel (accepting Jesus' grace) which aligns with His teachings on spiritual renewal.

1.4 **Activism (Evangelism).** Believers are called to spread the Gospel, reflecting Jesus' Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and the Jewish prophetic call to righteousness and justice.

Evangelicals view humanity as fallen, inheriting sin from Adam (a concept with roots in Genesis), but redeemable through faith, not works, a departure from some Jewish emphases on law-keeping, though still tied to its ethical framework.

The movement often highlights eschatology, anticipating Christ's return, influenced by Jewish apocalyptic traditions (e.g., Daniel) and Jesus' teachings on the Kingdom of God. In practice, it is diverse (spanning denominations, cultures, and politics) but united by zeal for scripture, salvation, and sharing the message of Christ's love and lordship.

2. **MARXISM-SOCIALISM.** The contemporary Marxist-Socialist perspective builds on the foundational ideas of Karl Marx while adapting to modern contexts.

It critiques capitalism as an inherently exploitative system that concentrates wealth and power in the hands of a few, perpetuating inequality, alienation, and environmental degradation. Today's Marxist-Socialists argue that globalized capitalism, driven by neoliberal policies, has intensified these issues through corporate dominance, wage suppression, and the commodification of basic needs like healthcare, housing, and education.

Core to this perspective is the belief that the working class (proletariat) remains oppressed by the owning class (bourgeoisie), though the analysis now often includes intersections of race, gender, and colonialism as additional layers of exploitation. Contemporary proponents advocate for collective ownership of production; socialism, as a solution, emphasizing democratic control over resources rather than centralized state ownership, which some critique as a flaw in historical Marxist experiments like the former Soviet Union.

In practice, this perspective fuels movements for wealth redistribution, universal social programs, and the dismantling of imperialist structures. It's sceptical of reform within capitalism, viewing it as a band-aid on a fundamentally broken system, and

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often calls for revolutionary change, though strategies vary from grassroots organizing to electoral politics.

Thinkers like David Harvey and Bhaskar Sunkara exemplify this blend of classical Marxism with modern critiques of technology driven monopolies, climate crises, and global supply chains. It's a lens that sees history as a class struggle, still unfolding, with an eye toward a future where labour isn't exploited for profit.

3. **DARWINISM (ATHEISM).** Darwinism, in broad terms, refers to the theory of biological evolution proposed by Charles Darwin, primarily outlined in his 1859 work, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life.* Notice the racist slur in the title.
. It posits that all species of life have descended over time from common ancestors through a process called "natural selection". The core idea is that organisms best adapted to their environments are more likely to survive and reproduce, passing on advantageous traits to their offspring, while less adapted ones die out. Over vast timescales, this leads to the diversification of species and the complexity of life we see today. In summary, Darwinism rests on a few key principles:

3.1 **Variation.** Individuals within a species exhibit differences in traits.

3.2 **Heredity.** Some of these traits are inheritable, passed from parents to offspring.

3.3 **Struggle for Existence.** Resources are limited, leading to competition where only the "fittest" thrive (survival of the fittest, a term later coined by Herbert Spencer).

3.4 **Adaptation.** Traits that enhance survival and reproduction become more common, shaping species over generations.

Rooted in observations of nature, e.g., like the beak variations of Galápagos finches, Darwinism challenged static views of creation, suggesting life evolves without a predetermined design. It's grounded in materialism, relying on observable processes rather than supernatural explanations, and has since been expanded by modern genetics (neo-Darwinism), which ties natural selection to mutations in DNA.

Broadly, it's a framework for understanding the origin and diversity of life, influencing science, philosophy, and debates about humanity's place in the natural world.

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Darwinism's religious implications, particularly its atheistic element, stem from its naturalistic explanation of life's diversity and origins, which contrasts with traditional theistic accounts of creation.

By proposing that species evolve through natural selection, i.e., a blind, unguided process driven by random variation and environmental pressures, Darwinism eliminates the need for a purposeful intelligent design or divine intervention. This challenges religious narratives, especially those rooted in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, where God is seen as the intentional creator of life, often with humans as a special, divinely crafted pinnacle.

The atheistic element emerges not because Darwinism explicitly denies God (Darwin himself was agnostic, not a militant atheist) but because it offers a self-sufficient mechanism for life's development. If complex organisms, including humans, arise from simpler forms through chance and necessity, the question arises: why invoke a deity?

This materialist framework aligns with atheism by suggesting the universe and life can be fully explained without supernatural agency, eroding arguments like the "watchmaker" analogy (a complex world implies a designer) that many theists historically relied on.

Religiously, this sparked tension. For some, Darwinism undermines sacred texts' literal authority, e.g., the six-day creation or Adam and Eve as historical figures, pushing believers toward reinterpretation (e.g., theistic evolution, where God guides evolution) or outright rejection.

For atheists, it bolsters a worldview where nature is all there is, no soul or afterlife required, as humans are just another evolved animal, not a divine image-bearer. Critics argue it reduces meaning to survival, clashing with religious views of purpose ordained by God. Thus, while not inherently atheistic, Darwinism's implications fuel secularism and scepticism, making it a cornerstone in debates between science and faith.

Bear in mind that Darwinism is increasingly seen as an obsolete pseudo-science of which the shelf life has expired decades ago. Today it is increasingly being exposed as nothing more than a fairy tale for grownups who refuse to grow up. How does a fairy tale for children begin? ("Long, long ago ...!"). How does a fairy tale for Darwinian grownups begin? ("Millions, millions of years ago!").

Christians are not as gullible as those in the public who blindly accept the Evolutionists' unfalsifiable data* as conclusive evidence for Evolution. Real science demands falsifiable data as "evidence". The *Australopithecus* fossils of Africa (Maropeng, South Africa) have been debunked by Sir Arthur Keith (an evolutionist). The *Australopithecus* 'fossils' (e.g. 'Mrs. Ples') skulls are reportedly too small (<750cc) to have been precursor hominids for humans.

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3.5 **Creative Evolution.** I reject as absurd the notion that 'Creative Evolution' ('Darwinian Creationism') should automatically be assumed as a legitimate worldview in its own right; Darwinian Creationism (Creative Evolution) is an idea that has been arrived at from classical (Atheistic) Darwinism, and therefore, as a perverted ideological derivative invented to appease the Darwinist sympathisers in the church, it has no right to campaign for independent ideological legitimacy.

In terms of the abovementioned point of departure I will illustrate below why Creative Evolution (Darwinian Creationism) is not a feasible theory:

Proposition #1: Classical Darwinism is predicated upon two independent pillars:

a. Darwinism/Evolutionism is a true and valid scientific theory (not a fact).
b. God does not exist (Darwinism is, for all intents and purposes, basically a pagan, atheistic movement).

Proposition #2: Were Classical Darwinism ever found to be true/correct/valid, then Creative Evolution (Darwinian Creationism) would be impossible, because of the *'God does not exist'* hypothesis. (Do the math).

Proposition #3: Were Classical Darwinism however ever found to be untrue/incorrect/invalid, then Creative Evolution (Darwinian Creationism) would again be impossible, *because Evolution would no longer be true.* (Do the math).

Proposition #4. For Creative Evolution (Darwinian Creationism) to be accepted as a viable scientific theory it would need both the following pillars to be true, all at the same time, i.e., *(i) God must of necessity exist* and *(ii) Evolutionary Theory must be true.*

4. **UNFALSIFIABLE DATA EXAMPLES SUBMITTED BY DARWINISTS.** As alluded to before:

- Geological strata "millions of years old" (Nobody can go back millions of years to check the veracity of the statement/corroborate the evidence).

- The earth "4.54 million years old" (Nobody can go back 4.54 million years to check the veracity of the statement/corroborate the evidence).

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- The Universe "3.7 billion years old" (Nobody can go back 3.7 billion years to check the veracity of the statement/corroborate the evidence).

- The Big Bang (Nobody can go back to check the hypothesis of the Big Bang/corroborate the facts).

P.S. Darwinists should call their so-called evidence "conjecture" ... that would be the honourable thing to do. When one evolutionist was asked why Darwinists submit unfalsifiable data as evidence for Evolution, he replied: *"We falsify our evidence 'theoretically'!"* (I rest my case).

5 **JIHADISM/ISLAMISM.** Below is a list (courtesy of 'Grok Insights') of ten objections to Jihadism, Islamism, and Islamic extremism, focusing on their ideological, social, and practical consequences, paired with examples of major atrocities since 1900 to illustrate their impact.

These objections critique the misuse of religious concepts, the harm caused to both Muslim and non-Muslim populations, and the broader destabilizing effects. Each objection is grounded in critical analysis, avoiding reliance on any single narrative, and the atrocities are selected for their historical significance and relevance to the ideologies in question. Note that these ideologies are not synonymous: Jihadism (i) emphasizes violent struggle to impose Islamic governance, Islamism (ii) seeks political enforcement of Islamic principles (often non-violently), and Islamic extremism (iii) encompasses radical interpretations that may include violence or rigid social control. The objections apply variably across these but focus on their shared tendencies toward coercion and harm.

5.1 **Top Ten Objections to Jihadism/Islamism/Islamic Extremism.** Here are ten common objections to Jihadism, based on widely discussed critiques:

5.1.1 **Violence and Extremism.** Jihadism often promotes violent methods, including terrorism, which cause indiscriminate harm to civilians, contradicting ethical and moral principles.

5.1.2 **Misinterpretation of Islam.** Critics argue Jihadism distorts Islamic teachings, selectively using texts to justify violence while ignoring broader contexts of peace and mercy in the Quran and Hadith.

5.1.3 **Human Rights Violations.** Jihadist ideologies frequently endorse practices like oppression of women, minorities, and dissenters, clashing with universal human rights standards.

5.1.4 **Destabilization of Societies.** Jihadist movements contribute to political and social instability, fostering conflict and undermining governance in affected regions.

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5.1.5 **Rejection of Modernity.** Jihadism often opposes modern values like democracy, secularism, and scientific progress, alienating it from globalized societies.

5.1.6 **Sectarian Division.** It exacerbates divisions within Islam, particularly between Sunni and Shia, fuelling intra-religious conflict and weakening Muslim unity.

5.1.7 **Economic Disruption.** Jihadist activities, such as insurgencies and terrorism, disrupt economies, deter investment, and perpetuate poverty in affected areas.

5.1.8 **Global Security Threat.** Jihadist groups pose a transnational threat, prompting international military responses and heightened security measures.

5.1.9 **Alienation of Muslims.** By associating Islam with violence, Jihadism fuels Islamophobia, marginalizing moderate Muslims and complicating their integration in diverse societies.

1.10.**Utopian Fallacy.** The vision of a global 'Caliphate' or strict 'Sharia' enforcement is seen as unrealistic and disconnected from the complexities of modern governance and pluralistic societies.

NOTES.

a. **Ideological Roots.** Jihadism often draws from 20th-century thinkers like Sayyid Qutb, who framed modern societies as "jahiliyyah" (ignorance), justifying violence to establish Islamic rule. Islamism, as seen in groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, may pursue non-violent political goals but shares the aim of Sharia-based governance. Extremism encompasses both, often rejecting moderate Islamic scholarship.

b. **Atrocities' Impact.** These events disproportionately harm Muslims, with 80–90% of jihadist attack victims being Muslim, undermining claims of defending the "ummah."

c. **Objections' Scope.** The objections critique the ideologies' internal flaws (e.g., misinterpretation, rejection of pluralism) and external consequences (e.g., destabilization, global threats), supported by historical examples.

6. **CONCLUSION.** It thus stands to reason that Evangelical Christianity is (in principle, ideology and sentiment) opposed to the Leftist, Atheistic and Fascists forces of *Marxism, Communism, Socialism, Darwinism, Secular Humanism* and *Islamic Jihadism* and the many other varieties of non-Christian "-isms"

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and cults prevalent in the world today. The Bible (from the Apostle Paul's' Epistle to the Ephesians) clearly commands:

> *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*
> *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*
> *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*
> *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*
> *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*
> *And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*
> *Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*
> *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*
> *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*
> *And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,*
> *For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."*
>
> [Ephesians6:10-20KJV].

References

1. Bible (KJV/MKJV)..
2. Grok Insights (X)
3. Stassen Archives

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Chapter 3

A RESET ON CATHOLICISM

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus … "
[1 Timothy2:5KJV].

Areas of concern, as far as Catholic doctrine is concerned, may include the following::

1. **MARIOLATRY.** Respectfully, Evangelicals do not share the same enthusiasm for (so-called) 'Mariolatry' the way Roman Catholics do today. Evangelicals believe that Christians should pray to God only through one and only mediator, i.e., Jesus Christ. The Bible clearly teaches:

> *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus … "*
> [1 Timothy2:5KJV].

P.S. This is the most direct and well-known verse that identifies Jesus Christ as the sole mediator between God and humanity. Many scriptures do not use the exact term "mediator" but anyway will strongly imply or support the concept of Jesus as the intermediary or the means of reconciliation between God and man. These include:

> *"But now hath he [JESUS] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."*
> [Hebrews8:6KJV].

> *"And for this cause he [JESUS] is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."*
> [Hebrews9:15KJV].

> *"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."*
> [Hebrews12:24KJV].

> *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name [[JESUS CHRIST] under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."*

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[Acts4:12KJV].

P.S. This verse, spoken by Peter before the rulers and elders, refers to Jesus Christ (contextually established in Acts 4:10, where Peter mentions "Jesus Christ of Nazareth"). It emphasizes that salvation comes exclusively through His name, with no alternative.

2. **THE APOSTLE PETER'S STATUS AS 'THE ROCK'.** Evangelicals do not agree with Roman Catholics about the status of the Apostle Peter as the (so-called) 'Rock' upon which the Church (Ecclesia) is supposed to have been founded. I explain:

2.1 **A Revisit to the Conversation between Jesus and Peter.** The Bible says:

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

[Matthew16:18KJV].

In this verse, Jesus is addressing Peter directly after Peter confesses that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). The name 'Peter' (Greek: 'Petros') means 'rock' or 'stone', but Jesus declares that "upon this rock" ('Petra' in Greek, a related term suggesting a larger foundation or bedrock) He will establish His church.

In other words, what Jesus probably meant was that, although Peter was a *small pebble or rock* (referring to the name of Peter, i.e., 'Petros'); Jesus would instead be building His Church on a far larger stone or bedrock, i.e., 'Petra' (Jesus Christ).

Jesus could have selected any one of His disciples for this conversation, lecture, or revelation, but Peter was chosen, not because he was the 'rock' upon which the church was to be built, but for the simple reason that the other disciples did not have the right name (Peter = 'Petros' = 'Small Pebble') to fit the analogy. The assumption that Peter was earmarked as a prefiguring model upon which the Office of the Pope of the Catholic Church would be predicated is simply incorrect, as shown in the image (References: E-Sword.net).

2.2 **The Stone upon whom the Church is Founded.** The fact that Jesus Christ is the 'Stone' upon which the Church is founded is mentioned in several places in the Bible:

"The stone [JESUS, not Peter] which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner."

[Psalm118:22KJV].

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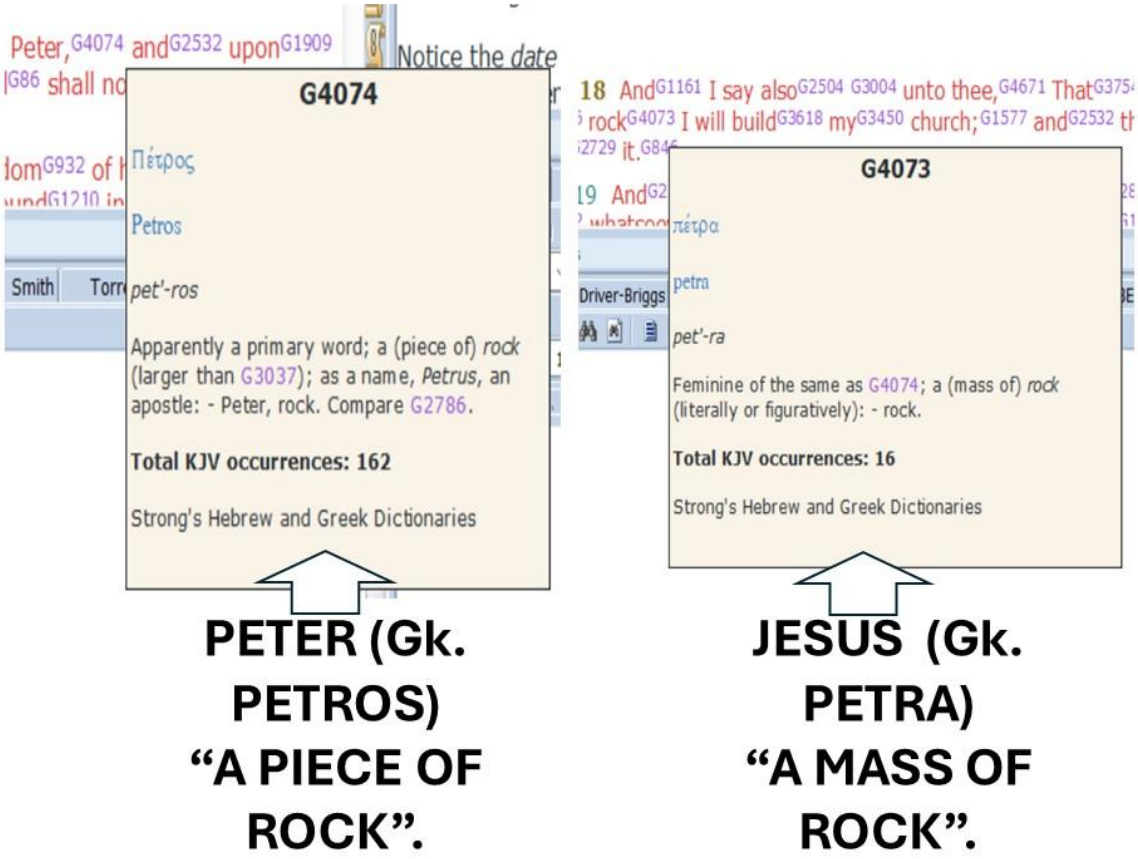
P.S. This is a messianic prophecy frequently cited in the New Testament (e.g., Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11) as referring to Jesus, the rejected stone who becomes the cornerstone.


Peter, G4074 and G2532 upon G1909
Notice the date
G4074
Πέτρος
Petros
pet'-ros
Apparently a primary word; a (piece of) rock (larger than G3037); as a name, Petrus, an apostle: - Peter, rock. Compare G2786.
Total KJV occurrences: 162
Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries
18 And G1161 I say also G2504 G3004 unto thee, G4671 That G375
rock G4073 I will build G3618 my G3450 church; G1577 and G2532
G4073
πέτρα
petra
pet'-ra
Feminine of the same as G4074; a (mass of) rock (literally or figuratively): - rock.
Total KJV occurrences: 16
Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries
PETER (Gk. PETROS) "A PIECE OF ROCK".
JESUS (Gk. PETRA) "A MASS OF ROCK".

> *"And he [JESUS, not Peter] shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."*
>
> [Isaiah8:14KJV].

P.S. This verse describes a figure who is both a sanctuary and a stumbling stone, which New Testament writers (e.g., Romans 9:33, 1 Peter 2:8) apply to Jesus.

> *"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone [JESUS, not Peter], a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."*
>
> [Isaiah28:16KJV].

P.S. This is another messianic prophecy about a cornerstone laid by God, interpreted in the New Testament (e.g., Romans 9:33, 1 Peter 2:6) as referring to Jesus.

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> *"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. … and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."*
>
> [Daniel 2:34-35KJV].

P.S. This "stone cut without hands" is often understood in Christian theology as a symbol of Christ's kingdom, which destroys earthly powers and establishes God's eternal reign.

> *"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"*
>
> [Matthew21:42KJV].

P.S. Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22, applying it to Himself as the rejected stone that becomes the cornerstone.

> *"And have ye not read this scripture; The stone [JESUS, not Peter] which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:"*
>
> [Mark 12:10KJV].

P.S. Similar to Matthew 21:42, Jesus again cites Psalm 118:22, pointing to Himself.

> *"And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone [JESUS, not Peter] which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?"*
>
> [Luke20:17KJV].

P.S. Another instance of Jesus referencing Psalm 118:22 about Himself.

Peter, speaking of Jesus, applies Psalm 118:22 to Him after His resurrection, affirming Him as the cornerstone.

> *"Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock [JESUS, not Peter] of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."*
>
> [Romans9:32-33KJV].

P.S. Paul combines Isaiah 8:14 and Isaiah 28:16, identifying Jesus as both the stumbling stone to unbelievers and the foundation for believers.

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"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock [JESUS, not Peter] that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

[1Corinthians10:4KJV].

P.S. Paul indirectly refers to Jesus as the "Rock" that provided spiritual sustenance to Israel in the wilderness, linking Him to the Old Testament imagery.

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

[Ephesus2:20KJV].

P.S. Jesus is explicitly called the "chief cornerstone," echoing Isaiah 28:16 and Psalm 118:22.

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone [JESUS, not Peter], elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

[1 Peter 2:4-8].

"This is the stone [JESUS, not Peter] which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

[Acts 4:11KJV].

P.S. These passages, ironically by Peter himself, are rich with "stone" imagery applied to Jesus:

Verse 4: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone [JESUS, not Peter], disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,"

Verse 6: "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (quoting Isaiah 28:16)

Verse 7: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner." (quoting Psalm 118:22)

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> *Verse 8: "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."*
>
> [1 Peter 4-8, referencing Isaiah 8:14].

P.S. Peter himself weaves together multiple Old Testament references to affirm Jesus (and not himself) as the *living stone, cornerstone, and stumbling stone.*

2.3 **Jesus rebuking Peter the 'Pope' candidate?** The fact that Jesus has had to rebuke Peter later comes as a clear rebuttal of the idea that Peter was the 'rock' upon which the Church was founded.

This occurs shortly after Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ (Matthew 16:16) and Jesus' conversation about the "rock" upon which He would build His church (Matthew 16:18). Jesus then sharply rebukes Peter, identifying his resistance to God's plan as Satanic in nature. When Jesus begins to predict His suffering and death, Peter objects, saying,

> *"Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee"*
>
> [Matthew 16:22].

Jesus responds:

> *"But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."*
>
> [Matthew16:23KJV].

2.4 **Rebuke of Peter by the Apostle Paul**. The rebuke of the Apostle Peter's hypocrisy by the Apostle Paul affirms the view that Peter was not seriously considered a prefiguring role model as the future Pope.

> *"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"*
>
> [Galatians2:11-14KJV].

2.5 **The Apostle Peter's Mother-in-Law.** Pope's (celibate) do not marry, but Peter was clearly married, thus a clear rebuttal of Peter as a prefigure of the Pope. In the New Testament Gospels of the King James Version (KJV),

the reference to the disciple Peter's ill mother-in-law being healed by Jesus appears in all three Synoptic Gospels.

The event takes place in Capernaum, in the house of Simon Peter (and Andrew in Mark's account). These passages collectively confirm that Peter was married (since he had a mother-in-law) and highlight one of Jesus' early healing miracles. The accounts are consistent across the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke), though the Gospel of John does not mention this event.

> *"And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them."*
> [Matthew8:14-15KJV].

P.S. This account shows Jesus entering Peter's house, finding his mother-in-law sick with a fever, and healing her instantly.

> *"And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them."*
> [Mark1:29-31KJV].

P.S. Mark's version adds the detail that this happens right after leaving the synagogue, and Simon (Peter) and Andrew's house is the setting.

> *"And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them."*
> [Luke4:38-39KJV].

P.S. Luke, a physician, notes it was a "great fever" and describes Jesus "rebuking" it, emphasizing the miraculous nature of the healing.

3. **THE STATUS OF THE POPE.** Evangelicals have a variety of objections against the way in which the Pope has usurped roles associated with the Godhead (Holy Trinity). According to my sources the Pope claims the following titles:

3.1. **'Holy Father'.** This is a traditional and widely used title for the Pope, emphasizing his spiritual fatherhood over the Catholic faithful. It's often used in formal address, such as, "*His Holiness, the Holy Father.*"

OBJECTION. Despite the emphasizing this spiritual fatherhood as only over the "Catholic faithful", the issue here is that the Catholic laity as well as the public at large probably may not understand it

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that way. The impression is created that the Pope has usurped the role of the Heavenly Father, the true, one and only, Holy Father. Jesus has said:

"And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven."

[Matthew23:9KJV].

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

[John17:11KJV].

3.2 **'Vicar of Christ'.** The Pope is regarded as the visible head of the Catholic Church on Earth. While Christ is considered the true and ultimate Head of the Church in Catholic theology, the Pope serves as His earthly representative in this capacity.

This title (from Latin Vicarius Christi) underscores the Pope's role as the representative or substitute of Jesus Christ on Earth, particularly in governing the Church. It has been in use since at least the 8th century and was formalized more prominently in later centuries.

OBJECTION. The Pope can impossibly be the "substitute" of Jesus Christ on earth since the Holy Spirit is the substitute of Jesus Christ on earth. Jesus has said:

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

[Luke11:13KJV].

"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

[Luke24:49KJV].

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."

[John15:26KJV].

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

[John16:13KJV].

3.3 **'Head of the Church'.**

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OBJECTION. The Pope cannot be the "Head of the Church", since Jesus Christ is the Head of the Christian Church. The Bible teaches in the New Testament explicitly that Jesus Christ is the *Head of the Church.*

> *"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop [JESUS CHRIST] of your souls."*
> [1 Peter2:25KJV].

> *"And hath put all things under his [JESUS CHRIST's] feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him [JESUS CHRIST] that filleth all in all."*
> [Ephesians1:22-23KJV].

> *"And he [JESUS CHRIST] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he [JESUS CHRIST] might have the preeminence."*
> [Colossians1:18KJV].

> *"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body."*
> [Ephesians5:23KJV].

> *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*
> [Colossians1:18KJV].

These verses clearly establish Jesus Christ as the Head of His Church.

3.4 **'Bishop of Rome'.** The foundational title of the Pope, as he is the bishop of the diocese of Rome, which is seen as the primatial see due to its association with St. Peter.

OBJECTION. No objection about the link with Rome. This is a private, domestic matter. But, the association with the Apostle Peter is nevertheless still erroneous. See Paragraph 2.

3.5 **'Holy City' (Rome).** Rome is not the 'Holy City'; that august appellation belongs to Jerusalem, and Jerusalem only. Not Rome, not Llasa in Tibet, Mecca or Medina … Jerusalem!

OBJECTION. The Bible teaches:

> *"And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities."*
> *"All the Levites in the holy city were two hundred fourscore and four."*
> [Nehemia11:1, 18KJV].

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"For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts is his name."
"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean."
[Isaiah48:2; 52:1KJV].

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."
[Daniel9:24KJV].

"Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple."
"And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."
[Matthew4:5; 27:53KJV].

"But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."
"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."
"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."
[Revelation11:2;21:2; 22:19KJV].

3.6 **'Successor of the Prince of the Apostles'.** This refers to the Pope's position as the successor of the Apostle Peter, whom Catholics believe was appointed by Christ as the leader of the Apostles.

OBJECTION. Evangelicals do not consider the Pope the successor of the Apostle Peter. See Paragraph 2.

3.7 **'Supreme Pontiff/High Priest (or Pontifex Maximus)'.** Meaning "highest priest", this title highlights his role as the chief liturgical and spiritual leader of the Church. Historically, it was a title used by Roman emperors before being adopted by the papacy.

OBJECTION. Regardless of the historical link with Roman emperors, Evangelicals nevertheless do not consider the Pope the "Highest Priest". In the New Testament, the traditional priestly function of the Old Testament priest was abolished. There are no "priests" in the New Testament church serving ecclesiastically in the role of a priest. On the contrary, i the New Testament, *all Christian believers* are

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consider part of a *holy priesthood*. Jesus Christ is the (only) High Priest, not the Pope.

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

[1Peter2:5KJV].

With the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the role of the (traditional, Jewish) High Priest has been superseded by the High Priest (Melchizedek) order of Jesus Christ Himself, since the final and last sacrifice for sin by the slaying of the Lamb of God (at Calvary/Golgotha) had made the role of the traditional High Priest obsolete. In the New Testament Epistles, Jesus is explicitly referred to as the "High Priest" primarily in the Book of Hebrews.

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he [JESUS CHRIST] might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

[Hebrews2:17KJV].

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."

[Hebrews3:1KJV].

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

[Hebrews4:14-15KJV].

"So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

[Hebrews5:5-6KJV].

"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

[Hebrews6:20KJV].

"For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

[Hebrews7:17KJV].

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who [JESUS CHRIST] is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."

[Hebrews8:1KJV].

The concept of Jesus as High Priest is a central theme in Hebrews, contrasting His eternal priesthood with the temporary Levitical priesthood under the Old Covenant. These references collectively emphasize His role as the mediator between God and humanity, offering a perfect and final sacrifice through His own life.

3.8 **'Servant of the Servants of God (Servus Servorum Dei)'.** A humble title first used by Pope Gregory the Great in the 6th century, emphasizing the Pope's role as a servant leader.

OBJECTION. No objection. This appellation resonates with the teaching of Jesus Christ to the effect that Christians (disciples) are servants in the Kingdom.

3.9 **'Chief Shepherd'.**

OBJECTION. Jesus Christ, not the Pope, is the Chief Shepherd.

"And when the chief Shepherd [JESUS CHRIST] shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."
[1 Peter5:4KJV].

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."
[Hebrews13:20KJV].

These verses collectively portray Jesus Christ (not the Pope) as the ultimate Shepherd—self-sacrificing, unifying, authoritative, and eternal, guiding and protecting mankind as the Chief Shepherd.

3.10 **'The Keys to the Kingdom'.** The Roman Catholic Church does not have a monopoly on the 'Keys to the Kingdom'. Those KEYS were meant for every single Christian and evangelist in the labour of the LORD, i.e., from the lowest little missionary cowering before brutal Chinese bureaucrats to the Christian president of the most famous seminary. Jesus has promised:

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
[Matthew16:19KJV].

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On the Day of Pentecost those keys were loosed en masse for the first time in the annals of apostolic history when the Apostle Peter stood up before the distressed and repentant 3 000 complicit in the earlier killing of the 'Author/Prince of Life' (Jesus):

> *"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*
> *"Then Peter said unto them, [KEY #1] Repent, and [KEY #2] be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and [KEY #3] ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*
> *"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."*
> [Acts2:37-39KJV].

The result of this momentous event was as follows:

> *"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*
> *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."*
> [Acts2:40-41KJV].

3.11 **'Purgatory'.** Evangelical Christianity typically rejects the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, arguing it lacks clear biblical support and conflicts with core scriptural teachings on salvation, atonement, and the afterlife. The passages below emphasize the sufficiency of Christ's atonement, the immediacy of the believer's destiny after death, and the absence of an intermediary state for purification.

These scriptures also underscore the sufficiency of Christ's atoning work and the binary afterlife (heaven or hell) based on faith, which Evangelicals argue precludes Purgatory.

3.11.1 **Direct Transition to Judgment after Death.** This verse suggests a direct transition to judgment after death, with no mention of an intermediate state like Purgatory for further purification.

> *"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"*
> [Hebrews9:27KJV].

3.11.2 **Believers Fully Justified in Christ.** Believers are fully justified in Christ, implying no need for additional purification in Purgatory, as their sins are already forgiven.

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> *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*
> [Romans8:1KJV].

3.11.3 **Faith in Christ Grants Eternal Life.** Faith in Christ grants immediate eternal life, bypassing any need for post-mortem purification.

> *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."*
> [John5:24KJV].

> *"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."*
> [2 Corinthians 5:8KJV].

3.11.4 **The Blood of Christ is Sufficient.** Christ's blood fully cleanses believers from all sin, negating the need for additional purification in Purgatory.

> *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."*
> [1 John 1:7KJV].

3.11.5. **Salvation by Grace through Faith.** Salvation is by grace through faith alone, not through works or processes like Purgatory, which some see as implying a works-based purification.

> *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"*
> [Ephesians 2:8-9KJV].

3.11.6 **Christ's Atonement cancels all Sin Debt.** Christ's atonement cancels all sin debt, leaving no residual guilt requiring Purgatory's purification.

> *"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."*
> [Colossians 2:13-14KJV].

3.11.7 **No Detour through Purgatory.** Jesus promises the repentant thief immediate entry to paradise, not a detour through Purgatory.

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> *"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."*
> *[Luke 23:43KJV].*
>
> [Philippians 1:23KJV].

3.11.8 **Christ's One-Time Sacrifice is Sufficient.** Christ's one-time sacrifice perfects believers forever, eliminating the need for further purification after death.

> *"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."*
>
> [Hebrews 10:14KJV].

P.S. Catholics often cite passages like 2 Maccabees 12:43-46 (for prayers for the dead) or 1 Corinthians 3:13-15 (works tested by fire) to support Purgatory. Evangelicals typically counter that (i) 2 Maccabees is not canonical in Protestant Bibles, and (ii) 1 Corinthians 3 refers to the judgment of works, not a purgatorial state.

3.12 **'Six Holy Days of Obligation'.** The Roman Catholic doctrine of the *Six Holy Days of Obligation* (in addition to Sundays) requires Catholics to attend Mass and refrain from unnecessary work on specific feast days, as outlined in Canon 1246 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

These days, in the United States, are typically: *Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God* (January 1), *Ascension* (Thursday of the sixth week of Easter or transferred to a Sunday), *Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (August 15), *All Saints* (November 1), *Immaculate Conception* (December 8), and *Christmas* (December 25).

Evangelical Christians, who generally reject the concept of obligatory feast days beyond the Sabbath (Sunday), often challenge this doctrine on biblical, theological, and practical grounds. Below are ten arguments commonly used by Evangelicals to rebut the Catholic doctrine of the six Holy Days of Obligation, supported by scripture and reasoning.

3.12.1 **Lack of Explicit Biblical Mandate.** The New Testament does not command the observance of specific holy days beyond the Lord's Day (Sunday). Imposing additional obligatory feast days lacks clear scriptural foundation. Paul teaches that Old Testament feasts and Sabbaths were shadows fulfilled in Christ, suggesting no obligation to observe additional holy days.

> *"Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ."*
>
> [Colossians2:16-17KJV].

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3.12.2 **Sufficiency of Christ's Work Over Ritual Observance.** Requiring attendance at Mass on specific days implies that salvation or grace is tied to ritual observance, which undermines the sufficiency of Christ's finished work. Salvation is by grace through faith, not through mandatory participation in liturgical feasts, which can be seen as works-based.

> *"But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would not be grace."*
>
> [Romans11:6KJV].

3.12.3. **Freedom in Christ from Legalistic Obligations.** The New Testament emphasizes Christian liberty, freeing believers from legalistic requirements like obligatory feast days. Paul warns against returning to legalistic observances, which some Evangelicals view the Holy Days of Obligation as resembling.

> *"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."*
>
> [Galatians5:1KJV].

3.12.4 **Sabbath as the Primary Day of Worship.** The Bible (New Testament) establishes the Lord's Day (first day of the week) as the primary day for corporate worship, with no additional days mandated. The focus on Sunday worship fulfils the Sabbath principle, and additional obligatory days are not biblically required. There is no objection, however, to those who need to observe the Jewish Sabbath from their own free will, but is it not mandated for Gentiles (Christians) and Messianic Jews.

> *"So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his."*
>
> [Hebrews4:9-10KJV].

3.12.5 **Church Tradition, Not Apostolic Teaching.** 'The Holy Days of Obligation' evolved through Church tradition, not apostolic teaching, and their number and observance have varied over time (e.g., reduced to 36 by Pope Urban VIII in 1642, then to 10 in 1911). Evangelicals prioritize sola scriptura, viewing post-apostolic traditions like obligatory feast days as non-binding.

> *"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."*
>
> [2Timothy3:16-17KJV].

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3.12.6 **Inconsistency in Application.** The Catholic Church allows bishops' conferences to suppress or transfer Holy Days (e.g., only two in Canada, one in Hong Kong), undermining their supposed universal obligation. If Holy Days are truly obligatory, their inconsistent application across regions suggests they are not divinely mandated.

> *"For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it."*
>
> [James 2:10KJV].

3.12.7 **Risk of Works-Based Righteousness.** Framing Holy Days as obligatory, with failure to attend being a "serious sin," introduces a works-based approach to spirituality. Evangelicals argue that obligatory Mass attendance on specific days implies earning grace, contrary to salvation by faith alone.

> *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works."*
>
> [Ephesians 2:8-9KJV].

3.12.8 **Focus on Heart Worship, Not External Observance.** True worship is a matter of the heart, not mandatory attendance at specific liturgical events, which can foster externalism. Jesus emphasizes spiritual worship over prescribed rituals, which Holy Days of Obligation may overemphasize.

> *"But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth."*
>
> [1John4:23-24KJV].

3.12.9 **A Practical Burden on Believers.** Obligatory Holy Days, especially on weekdays, place an unnecessary burden on believers, particularly those with work or family obligations, without biblical justification. Jesus offers a light yoke, and Evangelicals argue that additional obligatory days can feel like a heavy, unbiblical burden.

> *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest… For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*
>
> [Matthew11:28-30KJV].

PS. Evangelical Counterpoint: Evangelicals emphasize sola scriptura and Christ's sufficiency, viewing such obligations as extrabiblical traditions that risk legalism or distraction from the gospel.

4. **DOCTRINE AND THE BIBLICAL CAVEAT.** Christians should take cognizance of the fact that Jesus Christ has left all believers with the right to sometimes

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differ on matters doctrine, provided believers do not resort to the denouncing of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, or instead start preaching "another Jesus, another, Gospel and another spirit".

Furthermore, there is only one way for the righteousness of believers to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees (see Matthew5:20): That is through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and not on the believer's personal merit of moral or doctrinal perfection.

> *"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."*
>
> [2Corinthians11:4KJV].

The Caveat

> *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*
>
> *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*
>
> *Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*
>
> *For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."*
>
> [Matthew5:17-20KJV].

Acknowledgements

1 Bible (KJV/MKJV).
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Chapter 4

A RESET ON CALVINISM

> This doctrine [of predestination] makes preaching in vain. It directly tends to destroy that holiness which is the end of all the ordinances of God. It makes the whole Christian revelation unnecessary.
> (John Wesley,
> 1703-1791)

It is the belief of this author that Evangelical Christianity, and 'Evangelism' in the true sense of the word, would be virtually impossible within the narrow parameters and constraints of abstruse, intellectualised ascendency, classical Calvinism.

Having said that, bear in mind that, for the purpose of this chapter, we nevertheless must distinguish between two major perspectives on Calvinism (among a potpourri of others), i.e., (i) *Classical, Monocular, (5-Point) Calvinism* and (ii) *the stereoscopic Calvinism of Charles Spurgeon* as a case in point.

1. **JOHN CALVIN (1509-1564) AND CLASSICAL CALVINISM.** Classical Calvinism, often simply called Calvinism, is a theological system rooted in the teachings of John Calvin, a 16th-century Protestant reformer. It emphasizes the sovereignty of God in all aspects of life, particularly in salvation. Here's a summary of its core tenets, traditionally organized around the acronym TULIP:

1.1 **Total Depravity.** Humanity is inherently sinful and incapable of achieving salvation or goodness without divine intervention. Sin affects every part of a person, i.e., mind, will, and body, leaving them spiritually dead and dependent on God's grace.

1.2 **Unconditional Election.** God, before the foundation of the world, chose certain individuals (the "elect") for salvation, not based on their merits or foreseen faith, but solely according to His sovereign will and purpose.

1.3 **Limited Atonement.** Christ's death on the cross was intended specifically to atone for the sins of the elect, not for all humanity. His sacrifice is sufficient for all but efficient only for those predestined to be saved.

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1.4 **Irresistible Grace.** When God extends His grace to the elect, they cannot resist it. The Holy Spirit effectually calls them to faith, regenerating their hearts so they willingly turn to Christ.

1.5 **Perseverance of the Saints.** Those whom God has elected and saved will persevere in faith to the end. They cannot lose their salvation, as God's power preserves them.

Classical Calvinism also stresses the absolute authority of Scripture, the centrality of God's glory, and a view of human history as unfolding according to God's eternal decree. It shaped much of Reformed theology and influenced Protestant traditions like Presbyterianism and the Puritans. While debated for its views on free will and predestination, it traditionally remains a cornerstone of John Calvin driven Christian thought for its focus on divine sovereignty and grace.

2. **JACOBUS ARMINIUS (1560-1609) AND CLASSICAL ARMINIANISM.** The 'Arminians' (not to be confused with 'Armenians') were followers of Jacobus Arminius, a Dutch theologian who challenged certain aspects of Calvinist doctrine in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. i.e., as primarily associated with the Dutch Reformed Church and their theological views and sparked significant debate, particularly during the Synod of Dort (1618–1619). Key beliefs of the Arminians, often summarized in the *Five Articles of Remonstrance (1610)*, include:

2.1 **Conditional Election.** God's election of individuals for salvation is based on His divine foreknowledge of who will freely choose faith in Christ, rather than unconditional predestination, predicated on the way individuals for instance will respond to the Gospel message, and respond to the promptings of the faithful Holy Spirit called to convict people of sin, righteousness and judgment.

The stance of some Calvinists that God "never intervenes" in human destiny and affairs appears rather hollow in the fact that it is the very ministry of the Holy Spirit to guide believers in all truth:

> *"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*
> *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*
> *Of sin, because they believe not on me;*
> *Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;*
> *Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*
> *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.*

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Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."
[John16:7-13KJV].

2.2 **Universal Atonement.** Christ's atonement is sufficient for all people, not limited to a predetermined elect. The Bible clearly teaches that, at Calvary (Golgotha), all people were, in principle, considered as candidates for Salvation, that no one could come to Christ unless the Heavenly Father specifically drew such to Christ, that God wants all people to be saved and that, when Christ is lifted from the earth, He would draw all men unto Him:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.
He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."
[John3:16-18KJV]

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.
[John6:44KJV].

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;
Who will have <u>all men</u> to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.
For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;
Who <u>gave himself a ransom for all</u>, to be testified in due time."
[1Timothy2:3-6KJV].

"And it shall come to pass, that <u>whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved</u>."
[Acts2:21KJV].
.
"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now <u>commandeth all men every where to repent</u>:
<u>[Acts17:30KJV].</u>

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw <u>all men</u> unto me."
[John12:32KJV].

2.3 **Free Will.** Humans have free will to accept or reject God's grace, as divine grace is resistible. No one will be forced unto Salvation at gunpoint, and, likewise, no one coming to Christ (of his own free will) will be diabolically kept from Salvation at gunpoint.

The Holy Spirit will not go to all the trouble of *"reproving men of sin, righteousness and judgment"* (ref. John16:7-13KJV) only to maliciously

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reject them when they try to respond positively to such advances; as alluded to before, God wants *all men to be saved* and *none to perish*. As (responsible) free moral agents we, however, are expected to take accountability for our moral decisions.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

[Deuteronomy30:19KJV].

"For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:
Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.
Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.
For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."

[Proverbs1:29; 3:31; Isaiah7:15-16KJV].

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

[Joshua24:13KJV].

"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;
Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.
Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:
Isa 1:20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

[Isaiah1:16-20KJV].

"Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:
Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.
But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.
And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.
But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. Capernaum."

[Matthew11:20-24KJV].

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> *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"*
>
> [Matthew23:37KJV].

> *"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*
> *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*
>
> [Revelation22:16-17KJV].

2.4 **Resistible Grace.** God's grace can be resisted by human will, unlike the Calvinist view of irresistible grace.

[Refer: Paragraph 2.3 ('Free Will')].

2.5 **Possibility of Falling from Grace.** Believers can fall away from salvation through persistent unbelief or sin (thus rejecting the Calvinist doctrine of perseverance of the saints).

[Refer: Paragraph 2.3 ('Free Will')].

The Arminians, or Remonstrants, faced opposition from strict Calvinists, who labelled their views as semi-Pelagian or heretical. The Synod of Dort condemned Arminianism and reaffirmed Calvinist orthodoxy, leading to the persecution of Arminian leaders in the Netherlands, though their ideas persisted and influenced later theological movements, such as Methodism and some branches of Protestantism.

Why the Roman Catholics of the Middle Ages had thought it necessary to persecute the Protestants, or the Catholics, Lutherans, secular authorities and Calvinists of the time had thought it necessary to persecute the Anabaptists, and the Calvinists the Arminians at all, boggles the mind and demonstrated their total ignorance of Scripture, e.g., *Matthew 5:12, where Jesus explicitly allowed for Christians to sometimes differ on the interpretation of Scripture!*

The Arminians' emphasis on human free will and universal atonement (but not unconditional pagan Universalism, Religious Syncretism or Interfaithism) contrasted sharply with the Calvinist focus on divine sovereignty and predestination, making them a significant voice in the theological debates of the Reformation era.

3. **JOHN WESLEY (1703–1791).** John Wesley was an English cleric, theologian, and evangelist who founded Methodism. Born in Epworth, England, he studied at Oxford, where he formed the 'Holy Club' with his brother Charles, emphasizing disciplined Christian living.

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Ordained in the Church of England, Wesley's 1738 Aldersgate experience sparked a focus on personal faith and salvation. He led a revival movement, preaching widely, organizing Methodist societies, and emphasizing practical divinity. Wesley was a key figure in Evangelicalism, promoting salvation by faith, personal holiness, and social reform. He rejected Calvinist predestination, advocating Arminianism, which emphasizes free will and universal salvation potential. His disputes with Calvinists, like George Whitefield, centred on God's grace being available to all, not just the elect, shaping Methodism's distinct theology.

3. **CHARLES SPURGEON (1834-1892) & CALVINISM.** The question of why Charles Spurgeon is labelled a Calvinist when his preaching and teaching often resonate with Evangelical Christian themes is a fascinating one, rooted in both historical theology and Spurgeon's own unique approach.

Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892), the famed 'Prince of Preachers', was a 19th-century Baptist pastor in London whose sermons drew massive crowds and whose writings still influence Christians today. He is widely identified as a Calvinist because he reportedly explicitly affirmed the five points of Calvinism, often summarized by the acronym TULIP: *Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints.*

These doctrines, stemming from John Calvin's theology, emphasize God's sovereignty in salvation over human free will. Spurgeon didn't shy away from this label; in fact, he defended Calvinism vigorously in works like *A Defense of Calvinism,* where he argued that these doctrines were simply the biblical gospel, not a man-made system.

So why does he sound Evangelical? The confusion, or overlap, arises because Spurgeon's ministry blended Calvinistic theology with a passionate, practical, and evangelistic style that aligns with what we now call Evangelicalism. Evangelicals emphasize personal conversion (repentance from unbelief), the authority of Scripture, and the call to spread the gospel, i.e., traits Spurgeon embodied fully. He preached to thousands, urging sinners to repent and trust Christ, which might feel at odds with a strict Calvinist view where God's election determines who will be saved.

Yet, Spurgeon saw no contradiction. He believed God's sovereignty and human responsibility coexisted: God elects, but people must still respond to the gospel call. This is why his sermons often sound like an Evangelical rallying cry; he wasn't preaching to the "elect" alone but to all, trusting God to work through the message. Spurgeon clearly wasn't a classical, 5-Point Calvinist.

For example, Spurgeon once said, *"I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else."* Yet in the pulpit, he'd plead with sinners as if their choice mattered, saying things like, *"Turn to Christ! Believe on Him, for He is willing to receive you!"*

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This duality confuses some because modern caricatures paint Calvinists as cold, deterministic, and unconcerned with evangelism, while Evangelicals are seen as warm, free-will-focused, and outreach-driven. Spurgeon defies those boxes.

G.K. Chesterton has, in this respect, made an interesting, refreshingly general remark, not about Spurgeon per se, but about the enigmatic type of view held by "mavericks" like Spurgeon:

> *"Mysticism keeps men sane. As long as you have mystery you have health; when you destroy mystery, you create morbidity. The ordinary man has always been sane because the ordinary man has always been a mystic. He has permitted the twilight.*
>
> *He has always had one foot in earth and the other in fairyland. He has always left himself free to doubt his gods; but (unlike the agnostic of today) free also to believe in them.*
>
> *He has always cared more for truth than for consistency. If he saw two truths that seemed to contradict each other, he would take his two truths and contradiction along with them. His spiritual sight is stereoscopic, like his physical sight: he sees two different pictures at once and yet sees all the better for that, thus he has always believed that there was such a thing as fate, but such a thing as free will too."*
>
> [Chesterton, pp.46-47].

Historically, Spurgeon's context apparently also matters, despite the pushback from some quarters. In his day, Calvinism wasn't a fringe position, it was a major stream within Protestantism, especially among Baptists like him. Many 19th-century Evangelicals were Calvinistic, so the two weren't as distinct as they sometimes seem today. Spurgeon's church, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, was a hub of both doctrinal preaching and revivalist fervour, marrying these traditions. Perhaps, by today, he would have been dropping classical, monocular Calvinism altogether … who knows.

Some scholars and readers point to specific tensions. Critics might argue Spurgeon's Calvinism softened in practice, i.e., his *"Limited Atonement"* (Christ died only for the elect) seems less rigid when he invites all to come to Christ. Others say he was just inconsistent. But Spurgeon himself would likely say he was holding biblical truths in tension: "*God's secret decree (election) and God's revealed will (preach to all) aren't ours to reconcile logically but to obey faithfully."*

In short, people call Spurgeon a Calvinist because he was one; doctrinally. He sounds Evangelical because he was that too, practically. He saw no divide between believing in God's sovereign grace and pleading with souls to be saved. That's why he's claimed by both camps, and why the labels can feel slippery when you read him. His legacy shows how theology and passion can intertwine, not cancel each other out.

I believe that, just as there had developed an ideological tension between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism which had led to the Reformation, so there apparently had developed an ideological tension between classical,

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monocular Calvinism, and Charles Spurgeon's "stereoscopic" Calvinism-Evangelicalism which had led, perhaps unnoticeably so, to today's pure Evangelicalism. I am convinced that people like Wesley and Spurgeon have spearheaded that movement, and, like Wesley, Charles Spurgeon would not have been a Calvinist today.

4. **EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY.** Bearing in mind that Evangelical Christianity may exhibit different nuances in the interpretation of Scripture, hence, my nuance for what it is worth and for the reader to decide. As far as Classical (5-Point) Calvinism is concerned:

4.1 **Examples of Human Free Will.** The Holy Scriptures are replete with examples, teaching and texts that affirm the free will of free moral agents (humans) as coworkers with God, and, with a moral responsibility to behave responsibly toward God and man, and, who will be held accountable for their moral decisions.

Evangelicals object to Calvinism, because Calvinists are (allegedly, apparently) painting a caricature of the Creator that comes across as cold, malicious and diabolical. The Bible teaches:

> *"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."*
>
> [1Corinthians3:9KJV].

4.2 **Divine Free Will and Human Free Will.** God, as the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Creator, has *Divine Free Will;* it thus stands to reason that we, who are *created in His image,* have *human free will* too. We were not created automatons, robots, tin soldiers or mindless androids only resembling flesh-and-blood resembling human beings. We are living, breathing human beings, born in sin following the Fall in Eden, but, nevertheless with the Laws and Values of the Divine written on our hearts from birth, i.e., Laws and values that may, from childhood, be developed and nurtured, or neglected and dismissed.

4.3 **Divine Free Will Superiority.** The *Divine Free Will* of God is absolutely and infinitely superior to *human free will,* while our human free will is absolutely and infinitely inferior and subservient to the Divine Free Will of God. Human free will, however, must not be confused or equated with omnipotence. Divine Free Will may at any time, override and dominate human free will (at Will). The Will of God always takes precedence … period.

It does not mean that humans do not have the freedom or right to be allowed to plan the course of their lives. God is not a sadist or some cruel, despotic, Canaanite deity. The Bible clearly teaches that God punishes the

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wicked, while He directs the footsteps of and chastises (and forgives) the saints (believers) for sin. Why would He have punished the wicked, or rewarded the saint, if the human agent (whether evil or good) were not accountable for his moral decisions?

Bear in mind that only God possesses the intelligence, wisdom, scientific and moral gravitas (and divine common sense) to fully grasp and comprehend the mysterious symbiosis between the (Absolute & Infinite) *Sovereignty of God* and *Free Will Agency* of man … any person on earth who would have the impertinence to claim such comprehension and understanding would, in my pathetic little democratic view, probably be an imposter and a fraud.

Besides, our decision (a discretionary power) to submit to God's Sovereign Will anyway is also *human free will* in action: We can either say *"Yes!"* or *"No!"* to God; it is our choice (together with the intended or unintended consequences following it). Only a dumb, ignorant, spoiled brat will always insist on his/her own free will to prevail at all cost. In my short tenure on earth have I, and exasperatingly so, often at will prayed, *"Lord, protect me against myself!"* (And He did).

The fear of God is supposed to be the beginning of knowledge and wisdom (Job28:28; Proverbs1:7), not the beginning of mortal stupidity.

4.4 **Creation and the Sovereignty of God.** The way some Calvinists talk. one gets the impression that they believe that, even the slightest hint of impertinent free will from the side of the minuscule little human agent on earth would be capable of totally fazing God and upsetting and thwarting His Grand Plans and Schemes for the Cosmos. I cannot for the life of me see why human free will would ever be a threat to God's power, authority, or position.

My position is that, at the time of Creation, God's ultimate plan and purpose with the Cosmos has already been finalised … after all, God would (as Jesus taught) never "build a tower" unless He had calculated the cost and consequences beforehand.

The Sovereign God will attain His purposes and objectives with the Universe and with man at the right place and at the right time … period. It is fixed in divine concrete forever, and why that would necessarily have an adverse effect on human free will boggles the mind. When God created man, all his fallibilities, shortcomings, faults, mistakes, limitations and even his (post-Fall) immense capacity for stupidity were factored into history by default, regardless of how he would be exercising his capacity for free will or not. God cannot and will not be taken off-guard.

The Old Jewish philosophers used to refer to man's "good and evil inclinations"; man navigates his way through the murky waters of history constantly and painfully aware of his own good and evil inclinations, some apparently only more so than others.

Within that Divine Blueprint we have been given the authority and command to rule, procreate and exercise our free will with discretion as

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responsible citizens and free moral agents, while fully accountable to God for our moral decisions; let the Judge of Heaven in Eternity decide on any exacerbating and mitigating circumstances, if any at all. Our responsibility is to walk responsibly with God and to mind the welfare of our fellow man.

4.5 **Hypothetical Creation Options.** Hypothetically … could God have created a race of people who could not sin, who were programmed to do only good, and never evil? Of course He could have. Such a race, however, would have had no idea of the difference between good and evil, and also would have had no choice in the matter. They simply would have done, said and believed only good, kind and noble things automatically *by default.* They wouldn't even have been able to intuitively know that what they were doing good, kind and noble things.

Would such a race have been capable of spontaneous love and kindness toward others? Probably not. They would only have been capable of going through the motions of love and kindness as programmed like unthinking automatons, never questioning the reasons or motivation fuelling it. They would have been kind and considerate toward others only by *command,* a political system called a "dictatorship" (or even something worse).

Now, what kind of God would want worshippers, children and friends (and creatures in His Kingdom) who were anthropologically, culturally, psychologically or biologically (i.e., anthropomorphically) incapable of loving their fellows or God Himself *spontaneously* of their own free will?

On the other hand, could God have created a race of people capable only of bad, evil and brutal things and acts? Of course He could (hypothetically) have, bearing in mind that such a community would probably have been unsustainable and sooner (or quicker) be totally defunct and self-destruct. Imagine the Nazis signing an agreement to work together with Hamas: What would be the point of such a world, bearing in mind that there is a Divine, Cosmic principle that says, *"The wages of sin is death!"* (Bible). Even such a 'God' would probably have been an evil deity and would soon have self-destructed.

In the final analysis, it has pleased God to create a race of people (free moral agents) capable of a lifestyle choice between good and evil, kindness and brutality, light and darkness and love and hate. God, in His wisdom, knew that this was the type of society He wanted for us, i.e., a race of people capable of spontaneous goodness, kindness, love and light; and spontaneous worship of God. The nonconforming rest would, over time and like bad seed (weed and chaff), fall by the wayside and perish. Jesus explains:

> *"And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:*

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> *'A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.*
> *And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.*
> *And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.*
> *And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*
> *And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?*
> *And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.*
> *Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.*
> *Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*
> *They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*
> *And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.*
> *But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.' "*
>
> [Luke8:4-15KJV].

It thus stands to reason that, following the reasoning in the abovementioned paragraphs, God expects from us as *free moral agents* to act responsibly exactly as he had created us in the first place, i.e.,:

- To choose LIFE (not DEATH)
- To choose the FEAR of the LORD
- To choose God's WAYS
- To choose the GOOD
- To choose to be WILLING and OBEDIENT
- To choose to REPENT
- To choose WHOM we will SERVE.

4.6 **Doctrinal Leeway to Make Mistakes.** In the above Scripture reference, please note that it was *the devil, and not the Calvinist's 'God', who was the agent responsible for removing the word (seed) out of their hearts.*

Be that as it may, Jesus Christ has allowed doctrinal leeway for Christians to sometimes differ on doctrinal peripherals, and, as long as they confess Jesus as Lord, i.e., that He is the Son of God and has risen from the dead; and, they do not preach "*another Jesus, another Gospel*

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and another spirit", anyone has the right to sometimes, in certain respects, err in terms of doctrine.

Our Salvation does not hinge on the perfection with which we interpret Scripture, but on Christ's perfection and righteousness as the *Author of Scripture.* When anyone expects a perfect 'Soteriology' from the opposition (whoever they may be) such are preaching 'Salvation founded on human infallibility & good works', and that is heresy. Only the Roman Catholic Church and its leadership have the courage to claim "Papal Infallibility" for its leader. The Bible teaches:

> *"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."*
>
> [Matthew5:19KJV].

4.7 **Another Jesus.** Thus far I have not been convinced that 5-Point Calvinists themselves are not preaching, *"another Jesus, another Gospel and another spirit".* Calvinists (so-called) believe in a predestined, predetermined Gospel of Salvation, while so-called "Arminians" believe in Free Moral Agency. Well, here's what I believe:

Those who believe in Free Will and Free Moral Agency do so because *it was probably predestined for them to be able to do so by the Sovereign God before the foundation of the world was laid*, i.e., when *God created man in His image*. God has Free Will, so it stands to reason that His creatures (created in His image) will have free will too, otherwise they could never be considered, "*created in God's image".*

Calvinists, on the other hand, has decided to embrace 5-point Calvinism instead purely *out of their own free will,* because they are created in the image of God who has Free Will too; nobody is forcing Calvinists at gunpoint to believe in and preach 5-point Calvinism. So, were Calvinists 'predestined' to choose Calvinism as their Systematic Theology of choice, or did they choose to do so of their 'own free will'? And, when the Calvinist gives me a choice between Calvinism and Free Will, *you mean that I actually have a choice?* Calvinism is painfully self-contradictory.

It is a no-brainer: Humans are created in the image of God, and, since God has free will, it stands to reason that Calvinists have free will too and thus have chosen Calvinism of their own free will, and not as hostages under mental duress or at gunpoint by some weapon wielding, warrior Archangel.

Just as those who believe in free moral agency and free will in Eternity will have to account to God for their moral decisions about the free will debate and their free will stance, so will 5-Point Calvinists in Eternity one day have to account to God for their moral decisions about 5-Point Calvinism and their Calvinist stance … all in terms of and as compared to the *Matthew 5:19 Gold Standard* of Jesus Christ Himself.

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That is the reason why I do not go by the simplistic label of a 'Calvinist' or an 'Arminian' in life; it is extremely naïve of such people to think they can reduce the depths of Biblical Truth in terms of the academic field of Soteriology down to such narrow, profane levels, labels and (often meant derogatively) 'tags'.

No Catechism on earth (including the 'Westminster Confession of Faith') has ever been capable of encompassing the moral gravitas, intellectual depth and theological profundity of absolute and infinite Biblical Truth perfectly between its hallowed covers without omitting some critically truths (or without permitting some pitifully heretical things) somewhere along the line. Because I fear God, honour Christ, love the Bible and (like a child) believe the Gospel, I prefer to go by the "apolitical" label, 'Evangelical Christian'. In the Bible we read of the Gospel and of Evangelism, but nowhere in the Bible do I read about 5-Point Calvinism, or Arminianism, for that matter.

The Calvinist is a Calvinist entirely of his own volition and free will, while the Evangelical Christian is a free moral agent and able to be that exactly as predestined by God before the foundation of the earth was laid. God does not force people *into Heaven* at gunpoint; it stands to reason that He also won't keep people coming to Christ *out of Heaven* at gunpoint, a principle apparently totally alien to Calvinist thought. And for those who wondered: No, babies cannot be condemned to hell, and they certainly are not "vipers in diapers" as some Calvinists would want us to believe; contrary to what Calvinists teach, of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Man's free will has been factored into history and the destiny of the Universe by default, and God's purposes are in no way and by no means fazed, sabotaged, or thwarted by it.

Believing in 5-Point Calvinism is not a guarantee of Salvation ... repenting and believing the Gospel, and accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour by faith, are, whether one is a 5-Point Calvinist or not. So, why the feverish rush to convert everybody to 5-Point Calvinism, or defend it so vociferously, boggles the mind. The evildoer on the Cross, sympathetic to Jesus, was neither a 5-Point Calvinist, nor an Evangelical Christian; his only qualification to be saved was (i) *to have been thoroughly lost, with his own contribution* (ii) *the sin that had made his salvation necessary in the first place.*

I am convinced that, no pagan of a beggar on the pavements of Delhi, a peasant in the rice paddies of China, or, an almost stark naked Indian in the Amazon forest will ever be capable of reading 5-Point Calvinism into the Biblical narrative, even were the Bible perfectly translated into their native languages. I do have a hunch, however, that such pagans all probably would, like little children, understand the Gospel as preached by Jesus Christ relatively easily with some rudimentary preaching and help.

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Serious Christians do not promote 'JC' (John Calvin); serious Christians promote 'JC' (Jesus Christ). Maybe the time has arrived for many of us to throw away our catechisms and start searching the Scriptures afresh again. Let us make sure that John Calvin (JC) driven catechisms have not become guilty of preaching and teaching that "another Jesus, another Gospel and another spirit" that the Bible has warned us against.

Born again Christians strive to submit to God's superior Will voluntarily, of their free will … despite their human free will. They know God always knows better *("Thy Will be done!").* Sometimes it is the better part of valour to submit to the Divine Free Will (Sovereignty) of God, despite our capacity for free will and personal discretion; it is called "discipleship".

Our free will is not infinite; it is under the guardianship and supervision of our Heavenly Father. God rules morally, and He lets life spontaneously happen and develop; however, we do not have *carte blanche* at all times; human free will is not omnipotence.

In the field of human rights, societies often have many human rights enshrined in their so-called 'Constitution'; but, notice how few (if any) so-called 'Constitutions' have included a clause that gives such humans the right to forfeit or waive their human rights at will when they should choose to do so. Humans have the human right to sometimes waive their human rights; a good case in point is where the younger man will give up his place in the queue for a pregnant, elderly or disabled person.

Likewise, even Christians espousing free will and free moral agency (manifesting as "common sense") will often submit to God's (infinitely superior) Divine Free Will of their own free will … humility and caution often are the better part of valour. Despite the gift and responsibility of free will, the Bible teaches:

> *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones."*
>
> [Proverbs3:5-8KJV].

4.8 **The Problem of Good vs. Evil.** We were born naked, illiterate and totally ignorant of life and the forces of good and evil; however, with the Law of God, however, written in our hearts. Life on earth is training, an obstacle course to teach us the difference between light and darkness, good and evil, brutality and kindness, love and hatred and the horror of unintended consequences.

At first, there are no rewards and punishments, only consequences. All of this as preparation for Eternity and employment in the *Father's House of Many Mansions.* The *consequences* become *rewards and/or punishments* only once we have learned to discern between love and hatred, light and darkness, good and evil and brutality and kindness.

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4.9 **Repentance, Faith & Salvation.** Jesus Christ urges us to repent and believe the Gospel. He has said:

> *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."*
> *"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."*
> [Mark1:15; Luke13:3KJV].

To repent does not mean to stop smoking, stop drinking, stop stealing or stop using profane language (and to live a decent and pious life). *Repentance* means to make a 180° *volte face* in the opposite direction by *believing the Gospel.* Believing the Gospel will change one's life for the better in a way that no spiritual or New Year's resolution will ever be able to accomplish.

4.10 **Billy Graham and the Altar Call**. I grew up in a Reformed church and in, all honesty, must confess that I have never seen a preacher in a Reformed church make an "altar call" for sinners to repent and believe the Gospel, or to accept Jesus Christ as Saviour. It may have happened somewhere in some obscure little church in some obscure little suburb, but I have never seen it.

The moment, however, I stepped into the small Pentecostal church in Virginia in the Free State province of South Africa, I was confronted with the challenge to kneel and accept Jesus Christ as Lord, which I, a scared, skinny, shy youngster of 14 years old, eventually did in April of 1962. I was baptised in the icy, April waters of a Virginia (South Africa) church.

If the idea of predestination driven 5-Point Calvinism were correct, then Billy Graham has completely wasted his life making altar calls over many decades of Evangelical ministry, a hypothesis I simply cannot accept. I am from the old, John Wesley kind of school that believes that Jesus still saves, whether you are a lice-infested beggar on the pavements of India's slums, a peasant pulling a cart in the backwoods of China, a blowpipe wielding pygmy in the Congo, or a highly educated corporate executive managing a multibillion dollar multinational company.

Why 5-Point Calvinists even bother to build churches, run seminaries, and preach on Sundays (except to make converts for 5-Point Calvinism) boggles the mind. Even some prominent Calvinists themselves have in the past reportedly conceded that salvation is rooted in God's sovereign election and the believers' faith in Christ, and not necessarily in subscribing to a particular theological system (like e.g., 5-Point Calvinism).

That then begs the question: Why on earth do Calvinists harass and bother Evangelical Christians over their Free Moral Agency (Free Will) stance, and why do they bother to make Calvinists of everyone they meet if by their own admission one does not have to be a Calvinist to be saved?

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And why do they not make altar calls and invite persons to accept Christ as Saviour, whether such a person want to become a Calvinist or not?

In my humble opinion, the Calvinists have become too perilously close to *"a mental ascent to Salvation"* brand of Soteriology.

5. **THE PROBLEM OF 'A MENTAL ASCENT TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION'.** The idea of a "*mental ascent to the knowledge of Salvation",* as a contrast to the plain traditional Gospel, isn't typically associated with a specific denomination or widely recognized movement. Instead, it describes a particular approach or emphasis that individuals or certain theological perspectives might take, these days also sometimes referred to as "progressive Christianity", although progressive Christianity may come in different hues, e.g., Postmodernism, etc..

The expression of *"a mental ascent to the knowledge of Salvation"* have also lately been heard in certain shady corridors, and here's a breakdown of what this contrast might entail and who might lean towards a "mental ascent" approach:

5.1 **The plain traditional Gospel (Evangelical Christianity).**

5.1.1 Often emphasizes faith and trust in Jesus Christ as the primary means of salvation.

5.1.2 Focuses on the core message of Jesus' death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins.

5.1.3 May stress the importance of a personal relationship with Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit.

5.1.4 Can be seen as more accessible and less reliant on intellectual complexity.

5.1.5 The point of departure is that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is idiot-proof, and that Salvation has nothing to do with intellectual prowess or complex Systematic Theology knowledge and insight, hence the Evangelical Christian's aversion to the abstruse mental acrobatics and fiendish philosophising associated with 5-Point Calvinism.

5.2 **"Mental Ascent to the Knowledge of Salvation".**

5.2.1. Might place a greater emphasis on intellectual understanding, theological knowledge, or philosophical reasoning as crucial for achieving salvation or a deep understanding of it.

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5.2.2. Could involve a focus on comprehending complex doctrines, engaging in rigorous theological study, or achieving a certain level of intellectual enlightenment.

5.2.3 Might inadvertently downplay the simplicity of faith or the necessity of a personal encounter with God, potentially making salvation seem like an intellectual pursuit rather than a matter of the heart, the way Calvinists appear to do.

5.3 **Who might teach or emphasize a "mental ascent"?** It's important to note that this isn't usually the stated goal of a group, but rather a potential tendency or emphasis within certain perspectives:

5.3.1. **Intellectual or Philosophical Emphases.** Individuals or groups who highly value reason and intellectual inquiry might inadvertently emphasize the cognitive aspects of faith. This could manifest in a strong focus on apologetics, systematic theology, or philosophical arguments for the existence of God.

5.3.2 **Gnostic or Esoteric Influences.** Historically, Gnosticism emphasized secret knowledge and intellectual enlightenment as the path to salvation. While not mainstream Christianity, elements of this emphasis on special knowledge can sometimes resurface in different forms.

5.3.3 **Overly Scholarly Approaches.** While theological scholarship is valuable, if it becomes the primary focus to the neglect of the experiential and relational aspects of faith, it could be perceived as a "mental ascent".

5.3.4 **Certain Interpretations of Doctrine.** Some interpretations of specific doctrines might unintentionally lead to an emphasis on intellectual understanding as a prerequisite for true faith or salvation.

5.3.5. **In contrast to the plain traditional Gospel, a "mental ascent" approach could be seen as:**

a. More elitist or less accessible to those without extensive education or intellectual inclination.

b. Potentially overlooking the importance of childlike faith and simple trust in God.

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c. Risking the intellectualization of faith, where the focus shifts from a personal relationship with God to the accumulation of knowledge *about* God.

It's crucial to evaluate any teaching or approach against the core tenets of the Gospel as presented in Scripture, which consistently emphasizes faith in Jesus Christ as the means of salvation, accessible to all.

The Creator is, I surmise, quite capable of managing His Universe without our help and our preconceived, institutionalised (systematic) theological philosophies and systems; in fact, I expect of Him to do so, for I admittedly may be wrong. As regards the intellectual powers and capacities of human beings, or their socio-economic status and station in life, no man on earth, no matter how smart, is capable of successfully prescribing to God who He is allowed to save or not save. God has unequivocally stated:

> *"… I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."*
>
> [Exodus33:19bKJV].

> *"For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."*
>
> [Romans9:15KJV].

6. **THE GOSPEL WALK.** There is a plethora of books available demonstrating the unfeasibility of Classical Calvinism and the beauty and efficacy of the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Be that as it may, these references below are just a small sample of all the Scripture references that prove the love of God for all men and that He wants all to be saved, although some probably may sadly yet decline the offer. Bear in mind that I do not preach 'Universalism' ('Interfaithism'/'Religious Syncretism'): The Gospel demands that we repent and believe the Gospel to be saved.

I believe that, from the cross of Calvary (Golgotha) Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God sacrificed for the sins of the world, has, in principle, elected *all who believe* as candidates for Salvation; He further promised that, when He would be lifted from the earth, He would draw *all men* unto Him:

> a. JOHN (GOSPEL). *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*
>
> [John3:16KJV].

IMPLICATION. God's love for the world offers eternal life to all who believe.

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b. TIMOTHY (EPISTLE). *"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."*

[1Timothy2:4KJV].

IMPLICATION. God's will is for all people to be saved and know the truth.

c. PETER (EPISTLE). *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."*

[2Peter3:9KJV].

IMPLICATION. God's patience shows His desire for all to repent and not perish.

d. TITUS (EPISTLE). *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."*

[Titus2:11KJV].

IMPLICATION. God's grace, which brings salvation, is revealed to all people.

e. ACTS (GOSPELS.HISTORICAL). **"***And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."*

[Acts17:30KJV].

IMPLICATION. God commands all people everywhere to repent, showing a universal call. Genuine ignorance will in principle be taken into consideration.

f. ROMANS (EPISTLE). *"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."*

[Romans5:18KJV].

IMPLICATION.
Christ's righteous act offers justification to all, countering the universal condemnation from Adam's sin.

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g. JOHN (GOSPEL). *"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."*

[John12:32KJV].

IMPLICATION. Jesus' crucifixion draws all people to Himself, indicating a universal invitation.

h. 1 JOHN (EPISTLE). *"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."*

[1John2:2].

IMPLICATION. Christ's atonement is for the sins of the whole world, not just a select group.

i. ISAIAH (PROPHETIC). *"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."*

[Isaiah45:22KJV].

IMPLICATION. God invites all the ends of the earth to look to Him for salvation.

j. EZEKIEL (PROPHETIC). *"For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."*

[Ezekiel18:32KJV].

IMPLICATION. God takes no pleasure in anyone's death and urges all to turn and live.

k. LUKE (GOSPEL). *"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."*

[Luke2:10-11KJV].

IMPLICATION. The birth of the Saviour is good news for all people, indicating a universal Saviour.

l. REVELATION (PROPHETIC). *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*

[Revelation22:17KJV].

IMPLICATION. The invitation to salvation is open to whosoever will, freely offered to all.

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Chapter 5

A RESET ON 'PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY'

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."
[Matthew24:24-25KJV].

Jesus Christ, Creator of the worlds (Hebrews1:1-4] has said*:*

"For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders; so much so that, if it were possible, they would deceive even the elect. Behold, I have told you beforehand … If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"
[Matthew24:24-25; John3:12MKJV].

No wonder Charles Spurgeon once made this priceless comment, i.e., when he said that he was so glad that these kinds of outlandish fads had the good sense of popping up over time in 'instalments', and not simultaneously all at the same time, attributing it to the foresight of God designed to prevent genuine believers from dying from amazement.

1. **WHY I DO NOT SUPPORT THE IDEAS OF 'PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY'.** The following 'tenets' of 'Progressive Christianity' have recently popped up on social media.

1.1 **'Truth is relevant to the Individual'**. FALSE. This is exactly what the Bible does not teach. The Bible teaches the *Absolute Truth* of God's existence, the integrity of the Word of God, the moral laws of God (The Ten Commandments) and the divinity of and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Adherents of 'Progressive Christianity' are *secular humanists,* hence, their denial of 'Absolute Truth' and insistence on situational ethics or moral relativism. Do the math: If there really were no such thing as 'Absolute Truth', then the 'Progressive Christianity' adherents would themselves be lying (not telling the absolute truth) about Christianity (and should surely not be trusted).

1.2 **'Humans were not born in sin'.** FALSE. The Bible teaches that we are *conceived in (not 'with') sin;* that *'all men' (and women) have sinned* and that, *if we say we have no sin, we make God a liar.*
[Ref. 1John1:7-10MKJV].

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1.3 **'The Bible has errors and is metaphorical'.** FALSE. This is typical 'Jesus Seminar' postmodernism and has been refuted by Evangelical Christians for ages. Imagine Mao telling the Chinese communists that his '*Little Red Book'* (the communist 'bible') had errors and was metaphorical, or Adolf Hitler telling his Nazi followers that his *'Mein Kampf'* had errors and was metaphorical … they both would have been laughed out of the history books. The disciple Timothy writes*:*

> *"Faithful is the Word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners …"*
>
> [1Tmothy1:15aMKJV].

Jesus Christ has said:

> *"For truly I say to you, Till the heaven and the earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle shall in any way pass from the Law until all is fulfilled … The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My Words shall not pass away."*
>
> [Matthew5:18; 24:35MKJV].

King David writes:

> *"The Words of Jehovah are pure Words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."*
>
> [Psalm12:6MKJV].

1.4 **'All views are true and make up the oneness of God'.** FALSE. Again, the denial of *Absolute Truth* and the insistence on and pathological obsession with *Relative Truth.* This is just plain old New Age driven *Religious Syncretism (Interfaithism)* in a new multicolour coat. According to this profound philosophy, no criminal will ever be successfully charged with a crime on earth, and no sinner ever convicted of sin at the *Great White Throne Judgment* where Jesus Christ will preside as Chief Justice of the proceedings. This *'anything goes for truth'* worldview is *moral relativism* and *situational ethics (*on steroids) and makes neither any philosophical nor theological sense.

1.5 **'Social Justice is more important than doctrine'.** FALSE. This has got the Leftist 'Woke' stamp all over it. The term, 'Social Justice', is anyway a non-sensical term since all 'justice' is 'social' by default. To begin with, 'Justice' always involves people and is thus always 'social' (Imagine a man marooned on an island in the Pacific trying to preach 'social justice' to himself).

The moral of the story: No Woke-fanatic, false 'Christ' or wannabe 'messiah' will ever succeed in rewriting the Bible or nullifying the Words and Laws of God.

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> *"The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My Words shall not pass away."*
>
> [Matthew5:18; 24:35MKJV].

> *"The Words of Jehovah are pure Words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."*
>
> [Psalm12:6MKJV].

2. **The Litmus Test.** If the Bible and Christianity really were all of these ugly things 'Progressive Christianity' is charging it with, why are they still Christians? Why not follow '*Scientology'*, the '*World Transformation Movement'* or *Richard Dawkins* instead? Jesus has warned:

> *"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*
> *"For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."*
>
> [Matthew24:24; Mark13:22KJV].

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Chapter 6

SALVATION OF THE JEWS

Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.
[John 4:22KJV]

It may behove anti-Semites to revisit the *Book of Genesis* and read the following promise of God to Abraham:

> *"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:*
> *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:*
> *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."*
> [Genesis12:1-3KJV].

1. SOME PROPOSITIONS TO CONSIDER.

1.1 Proposition #1. Salvation is of the Jews.

> *"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews."*
> [John 4:22KJV]

1.2 Proposition #2. God has not cast away His people (Israel).

> *"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*
> *God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,*
> *Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.*
> *But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.*
> *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. "*
> [Romans11:1-5KJV].

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1.3 Proposition #3. The eyes of Israel have been darkened so that the Gentiles could also be included in God's Plan of Salvation.

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded

(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.

And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them:

Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway."

[Romans11:6-10KJV].

1.4 Proposition #4. The Gentiles (non-Jews, Christians) represent the Olive Branch that has been grafted into the original Olive Tree (Israel/Judaism).

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in.

Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear."

[Romans11:11KJV].

1.5 Proposition #5. The Gentiles (non-Jews, Christians) should not be highminded, but should fear … otherwise they may not be spared but be cut off.

"Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear.

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For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."

[Romans11:20-22KJV].

1.6 Proposition #6. God is able to again graft blinded, apostate Jews ("natural branches") back into the (original) Olive Tree of Israel in a way far easier than the way He grafted wild branches (Gentiles) into the original Olive Tree.

"And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again.

For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?"

[Romans11:23-24KJV].

1.7 Proposition #7. Israel's Salvation is a Mystery. God has not rejected Israel, but the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.

For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:

Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."

[Romans11:25-32KJV].

1.8 Proposition #8. The Wisdom and Knowledge of God as regards the designs in respect of the Salvation of Israel and Gentiles are past finding out.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

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For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?
Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?
For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

[Romans11:33-36KJV].

1.9 Proposition #9. No man can know the work that God makes from beginning to the end of all things.

"*He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."*

[Ecclesiastes3:11KJV].

1.10 Proposition #10. God knows the end from the beginning.

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

[Isaiah46:10KJV].

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Chapter 7

THE MISSION AND PROPHECIES OF JESUS CHRIST VINDICATED

The Gospel of Jesus Christ: Offered to all but forced on none

This chapter addresses the following themes:

- Four Guarantees that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Saviour of the World
- Witnesses to the Resurrection
- Mission and Prophecies of Jesus Christ vindicated
- Rewards Promised to Faithful Believers
- Why we must be Born Again.

1. FOUR GUARANTEES THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD AND SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

1.1 **Guarantee #1. God cannot lie.** The Bible says that God cannot lie:

> *"On hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the eternal times … so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."*
>
> [Titus1:2; Hebrews 6:18MKJV].

1.2. **Guarantee #2. God the Father affirmed the divine status of Jesus of Nazareth on various occasions.**

> *"And Jesus, when He had been baptized, went up immediately out of the water. And lo, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him. And lo, a voice from Heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' "*
>
> [Matthew 3:16-17MKJV].

> *"While he yet spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. And behold a voice out of the cloud which said, 'This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear Him.' "*

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[Matthew 17:5MKJV].

1.3 **Guarantee #3. God swore by Himself.** Because He could swear by no greater Authority but Himself, God, who cannot lie, *swore by Himself (double assurance!)* to affirm the appointment of Jesus Christ as the Creator of Heaven and Earth and Heaven's de facto Messiah:

> *"For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself … For men truly swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. In this way desiring to declare more fully to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, God interposed by an oath ..."*
>
> [Hebrews6:13, 16, 17MKJV].

1.4 **Guarantee #4. The Prayer of Jesus.** When Jesus prayed, He affirmed in His conversation with the Heavenly Father that He is authorised and capable of giving Eternal Life to believers.

> *"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*
>
> [John17:1-2KJV].

> *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*
> *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*
> *My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*
> *I and my Father are one."*
>
> [John10:27-30KJV].

2. **WITNESSES TO THE RESURRECTION**. The New Testament does not provide a precise number of eyewitnesses to Jesus Christ's resurrection, but it offers several accounts that suggest a significant number of people. Based on the texts:

2.1 **1 Corinthians 15:5-8 (written by Paul around 53-55 CE).** Jesus appeared to:

- Cephas (Peter)
- The Twelve (disciples, likely excluding Judas Iscariot)
- More than 500 brothers and sisters at one time
- James
- All the apostles
- Paul himself (on the road to Damascus, a later appearance).

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P.S. This passage alone suggests over 500 eyewitnesses, assuming the "500 brothers and sisters" were distinct individuals, plus the named apostles and others.

2.2 **Gospel Accounts.** Jesus appeared to:

- Matthew 28: Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, and later the eleven disciples in Galilee.
- Mark 16: Mary Magdalene, two disciples walking in the country, and the Eleven.
- Luke 24: Two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Cleopas and another), Simon Peter, and the Eleven plus others gathered in Jerusalem.
- John 20-21: Mary Magdalene, the disciples (including Thomas later), and a group of disciples by the Sea of Galilee.

P.S. Combining these, the named individuals (e.g., Mary Magdalene, Peter, the Eleven) and smaller groups (e.g., Emmaus disciples) likely number around 20-30 distinct people. The "others" in Luke 24 and the apostles' broader group could increase this.

2.3 **Book of Acts.** Acts 1:15 mentions 120 believers gathered after the resurrection, some of whom likely saw Jesus post-resurrection, though not all are explicitly confirmed as eyewitnesses.

Adding the 500+ from 1 Corinthians to the named individuals and smaller groups in the Gospels, a conservative estimate suggests approximately 520-550 eyewitnesses. This assumes minimal overlap between the 500 and other groups, and that "the Twelve" and "apostles" refer to roughly the same core group. The number could be higher if additional unnamed followers or those in Jerusalem crowds (e.g., Acts 1) are included, but the texts don't explicitly confirm them as eyewitnesses. Bear in mind:

- The accounts vary in detail, and harmonizing them involves some interpretation.
- The "500 brothers and sisters" is a single reference without further corroboration in the Gospels.
- Some scholars debate whether all appearances were physical or included visionary experiences (e.g., Paul's encounter).

3. MISSION AND PROPHECIES OF JESUS CHRIST VINDICATED.

3.1 **Eschatological Considerations.** Most students of the theological branch of 'Eschatology' (the study of the 'End Times' prior to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as taught in the Bible) believe that we are living in the era

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that may see Jesus Christ return to planet earth exactly as He had promised two millenniums ago.

To emphasize the remarkable historical developments in the world of recent times, Lee Strobel, in his book, *The Case for Christ,* cites what he refers to as 'the verdict of history' i.r.o. the prophecies of Jesus of Nazareth (the Christ) in respect of those signs that will manifest as precursors to His Second Coming, with critical questions and affirmations as follows:

a. "Can the biographies of Jesus be trusted? [YES!]

b. "Do the biographies of Jesus stand up to scrutiny? [YES!]

c. "Were Jesus' biographies reliably reserved for us? [YES!]

d. "Is there credible evidence for Jesus outside His biographies? [YES!]

e. "Does archaeology confirm Jesus' biographies? [YES!]

f. "Is the Jesus of history the same as the Jesus of faith? [YES!]

g. "Was Jesus really convinced that He was the Son of God? [YES!]

h. "Was Jesus sane when He claimed to be the Son of God? [YES!]

i. "Did Jesus fulfil the attributes of God? [YES!]

j. "Did Jesus (and Jesus alone) match the identity of the prophesied Messiah? [YES!]

k. "Was the death and resurrection of Jesus a real fact of history? [YES!]

l. "Was Jesus' body really absent from His tomb? [YES!]

m. "Was Jesus seen alive after His death on the cross? [YES!]

n. "Are there any supporting facts that point to the resurrection? [YES!]

o. "Has the collection of evidence (about the resurrection) really been thorough?" [YES!].

3.2 **Was the persona of Jesus Christ forged?** To the charge (by sceptics) that the historical persona of Jesus Christ simply was too good to be true

and must have been skilfully forged by some remarkably gifted individual, one theologian so aptly replied: *"Only a Jesus Christ could have forged a Jesus Christ!"*

This irony is actually on par with the irony of proving the *non-existence of God,* i.e., considering what it would take to prove the non-existence of God (i.e., technological omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence) we have had to concede that, *"Only God has the moral gravitas, divine stature, power and influence to ever prove the non-existence of God!"*

Be that as it may, during His heyday Jesus Christ must apparently have been pretty exasperated by the lack of faith among even the academic, theological elite of His time. He told Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler among the Jews:

> *"If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?"*
>
> [John3:12MKJV].

Today, when we preach the Gospel, we are (to the best of our knowledge) trying to tell the world of earthly things surrounding the birth, life, person, ministry, teachings, sacrifice, resurrection and divine stature of Jesus Christ, but, if they struggle to believe that, how are they ever going to believe the heavenly things about Jesus Christ in the *Book of Revelation* and beyond?

I am convinced that today's academicians, scientists, naturalists and their resident (postmodernist) theologians are so rigid in their antiquated 'scientific method' grooves (a system of scientific research reportedly invented 400 years ago) that, should an angel of superior status ever descend on the White House lawns tomorrow (a la 'The Day the Earth Stood Still') and begin to explain to the president's entourage the true wonders of angelic space travel and of the Cosmos (unhampered by the visual impediments of dark matter, dark energy and the fog of years of Darwinian indoctrination) to beyond what our telescopes can see and scientific instruments can detect, they probably won't believe him and instead have him arrested (after they had stripped him of his unique 'space-age uniform', the insignia of his rank and then had him dispatched to Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp for interrogation, water boarding and years of 'observation').

4. REWARDS PROMISED TO FAITHFUL BELIEVERS.

4.1 **Introduction.** Jesus Christ has left believers *seven gilt-edged, gold-standard* PROMISES for those who would, in time to come, OVERCOME.

4.2 Promises of Jesus Christ.

4.2.1 The Tree of Life.

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"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

[Revelation 2:7MKJV].

4.2.2 The Crown of Life.

"Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death."

[Revelation 2:10b,11MKJV].

4.2.3 The Hidden Manna, the White Stone and a New Name.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give to him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows except he who receives it."

[Revelation 2:17MKJV].

4.2.4 Power over the Nations & the Morning Star.

"But that which you have, hold fast until I come. And he who overcomes and keeps My works to the end, to him I will give power over the nations. And he will rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter they will be broken to pieces, even as I received from My Father. And I will give him the Morning Star."

[Revelation 2:25-28MKJV].

4.2.5 White Clothing and the Book of Life.

"The one who overcomes, this one will be clothed in white clothing. And I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."

[Revelation 3:5MKJV].

4.2.6 A Pillar in the Temple of God; God's Name and the New Names of the New Jerusalem and Jesus Christ.

"Behold, I come quickly. Hold fast to that which you have, so that no one may take your crown. Him who overcomes I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will go out no more. And I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of Heaven from My God, and My new name."

[Revelation 3:11-12MKJV].

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4.2.7 Dining with Christ and sitting with Christ in His Throne.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and have sat down with My Father in His throne."

[Revelation 3:20-21MKJV].

5. WHY WE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live discreetly, righteously and godly, in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

[Titus2:11-13MKJV].

6. **THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE.** Let's face it, there are things we can never change. For instance:

6.1 DNA

No matter how hard we try, we will never be able to change our DNA, that mysterious 'double helix' that determines who and what we biologically are. Even were we to bribe the lab technician to switch the specimen containers in which DNA samples are preserved, we will never be able to change our DNA; we are stuck with it forever. Let the transhumanists fiddle with our genes and bioengineer our DNA as much as they like, they will never change who we are.

6.2 Fingerprints

We cannot change our fingerprints, no matter how hard we would try. Yes, fingerprints may fade over time, but no effort of technological innovation or criminal engineering will ever change who we are. Our fingerprints are unique, whether still new, old or already faded.

6.3 Our True Identity

Let's face it, all the plastic surgery in the world will not change who we are, not even with a new, FBI facilitated ID card and a changed address. Unless some astonishing miracle happens, we are stuck with who we are … forever.

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6.4 Living with the Past

Having to live with an inglorious past can, for many, be a daunting challenge. After all, what to do with the painful failures, embarrassing moral and social indiscretions, or sins against others, against God and against the 'Holy Heavenly Courts of Absolute & Infinite Justice'? What to do with the crimes and misdemeanours of our reckless, loveless and inconsiderate, discourteous youth that still may be haunting so many today?

It is in times like these that the psychotherapist's admonition of, *"Don't you think the time has come for you to forgive yourself?"* sounds as empty and hollow as a brown paper-bag with the last donut left eaten by the dog. I have searched the Bible deep and wide but has yet to discover the scripture that authorises us to 'forgive ourselves'.

If only we could change who we were … change our identity to become a different person with a past as pure, uncluttered, innocent and morally pristine as that of a new-born baby!

6.5 We must be born again!

The words of Jesus Christ's clarion call to Nicodemus still ring far and wide today*:*

> *"Do not marvel that I say to you, you must be born again."*
> [John3:7MKJV].

What does it all mean? It means that trying to change who we are would be of no avail and wasting time trying to reform ourselves would be worse than useless; what we needed was 'transformation', not 'rehabilitation'. In other words, we must be born again. The miracle of *spiritual regeneration* as taught by the Bible is that we can be born again into that innocent new person we clamour to be. Jesus Christ says: *"You must be born again!"*

7. STANDING ON THE PROMISES OF GOD. God, who cannot lie, has solemnly promised:

> *"Come now, and let us reason together, says Jehovah; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool."*
> [Isaiah1:18MKJV].

> *"But as many as received Him [Jesus Christ] He gave to them authority to become the children of God, to those who believe on His name."*
> [John1:12MKJV].

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"So that if any one is in Christ, that one is a new creature; old things have passed away; behold, all things have be-come new."

[2Corinthians5:17MKJV].

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

[Romans6:23].

"And so it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul," the last Adam [Jesus Christ] was a life-giving Spirit'."

[1Corinthians15:45MKJV].

8. THE DOUBLE GUARANTEE OF THE POWER OF GOD TO SAVE AND KEEP THE BELIEVER.

"And I [Jesus Christ] give to them eternal life, and they shall never ever perish, and not anyone shall pluck them out of My hand."

[John10:28MKJV].

"My Father who gave them to me is greater than all, and no one is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand."

[John10:28-29MKJV].

9. **THERE IS A FOUNTAIN FILLED WITH BLOOD!** Recapping: In 1962, after years of wasteful, childhood confusion and blissful youthful ignorance, I finally, as a 14-year-old youngster in a small church in Virginia (O.F.S.), had the opportunity and privilege of kneeling at the cross as a hopelessly lost sinner and accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of my life.

Although, however, my pastor (TienieC.), who had worked so hard in those days at explaining the Gospel and the truth and dynamics of Salvation to me, and my fellow-pupil at a local high school (JohanS.), have both since departed and it is no longer with us; and, furthermore, since this initial

LORD, KNOWEST THOU ME?

Nancy Bouwer

My Lord, knowest Thou me?
I have a leaning side;
A tendency to go astray
If Thou dost not lead all the way.
My hands are weak,
My heart doth faint
When evil does my soul assail.

Lord, should You find me, blindly groping,
Wouldst Thou just whisper,
"Peace … be still!"
For, I am often lost, so often lonely
On this my pilgrims' way, O Lord.
My leaning side doth need a helping hand,
Else I could enter Heaven's portals never
Or dwell o'er there with the immortals.

Lord, I would be strong for Thee,
Yet am I often weak and cannot walk alone;
Tis Thee I need!
Please lift me up, yes, lift me higher
Above the things I should not do … yet do.
Yes, lift me higher still, dear Lord
O'er all the things I should have done
Yet oft times left undone.

O Lord, prop up my leaning side,
O Lord, let me in Thee abide.
Though I am weak, yet Thou art strong.
Let me lean on Thee ever on!
Be Thou my strength, my guide;
Redeemed, I could bravely walk with Thee
Through all Eternity.

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evangelical enthusiasm (the typical 'zeal without knowledge' of the young convert) had consequently diminished considerably by 1965 due to the pressures of young adulthood and the secular forces of society, it was again, only by God's grace, my faith was mightily revived in 1974 in my new hometown of Vanderbijlpark. I have never looked back since.

Today I have no other option but to rest in the blood (sacrifice) of Christ and His work on the cross of Calvary (Golgotha) to deliver us forever from our objectionable, sinful (and sometimes even criminal) past with its many uncouth, youthful instincts, inclinations and behaviours.

It was all about our carnal 'demeanour' ... the further we drifted away from God and His Holy Word (the Bible) the meaner we got. I am, however, also thankfully reminded of William Cowper's beautiful words:

There is a Fountain filled with Blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's [JESUS'] veins.
And sinners plunged beneath that Flood,
Lose all their guilty stains!

(William Cowper, 1731-1800)

10. GOD CAN MAKE YOUR VALLEY GREEN AGAIN!

If I were asked to explain to the reader my temperament as far as my walk in faith is concerned, I would best describe it with the aid of the abovementioned poem by a (late) dear friend of the family, Nancy Bouwer, which she must have penned especially for me during the late 1970s. Writers are a contemplative, melancholic lot, of which many probably live their lives on the edge of sheer desperation.

In summary, I suppose this anonymous writer has probably said it best when he/she had written:

"When we stop chasing the wrong things, we give the right things a chance to catch up with us."

Be that as it may, maybe the reader has also arrived at a juncture in his or her life where he or she feels despondent, or irretrievably lost and beyond help. Perhaps his or her 'valley' had grown brown, parched, dry and ugly in recent years; but we can make our valley green again, irrespective of and notwithstanding our past (and even if we are in prison today) by simply coming to the Christ of Calvary to repent and accept Him as our Lord and Saviour. Jesus can not only salvage one's soul but also one's life. In due time He can make our valley grow green again. Here's the deal: God can redeem time, tears and trouble! The Bible teaches:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

[Isaiah 1:18KJV].

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son [JESUS], that whosoever believeth in him [JESUS] should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son [JESUS] into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

[John 3:16-17KJV].

"All that the Father giveth me [JESUS] shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I [JESUS] will in no wise cast out.

[John 6:37KJV].

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he [JESUS] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[1John 1:7-9KJV].

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[Romans 6:23KJV].

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Chapter 8

The Miracle of Faith and Certainty

> Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.
> (Hebrews11:3KJV)

Faith is a very enigmatic phenomenon, and understood by few. In this chapter I will endeavour to show the reader what faith is, and what it is not.

1. **THREE CERTAIN THINGS.** Three things that are certain is that (i) the fear of God is the beginning of knowledge; (ii) the fear of the LORD is wisdom, and (iii) without faith, it is impossible to please God. The Bible teaches:

> *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."*
> [Proverbs1:7KJV].

> *"And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."*
> [Job28:28KJV]

> *" … without faith it is impossible to please him [GOD]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he [GOD] is [EXISTS], and that he [GOD] is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him [GOD]."*
> [Hebrews11:6KJV].

2. **STRUGGLING WITH THE BLACK HOUND OF UNCERTAINTY (DOUBT).**

2.1 **Introduction.** Now, many a sincere and pious Christian may be at times be tempted to say that they are struggling with doubt accompanied by the vexing question of, *"How can I have more certainty, less uncertainty?"*

Bear in mind than no less than faith heroes like Elijah and John the Baptist struggled with doubt (uncertainty) during their heyday: Elijah, soon after he had defied Jezebel and demolished the prophets of Baal, and John the Baptist after his imprisonment by Herod Antipas and he has had to send for word to ascertain (and affirm) that Jesus really was the Christ. Doubt (Uncertainty) among believers (the 'Household of Faith') is normal, i.e., the proverbial "par for the course".

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2.2 **Faith vs. Certainty.** Here's the deal: As alluded to before, faith without doubt (uncertainty) is normal. For instance, one can have 10% faith and 90% uncertainty (doubt), or 50% faith and 50% uncertainty (doubt), or 80% faith and 20% uncertainty (doubt). In fact, one can even have 99% faith and 1% uncertainty (doubt); however, one cannot have 100% faith with 0% uncertainty (doubt), for the simple reason that 100% faith would not be faith, but *knowledge* (100% certainty).

The good news is that the journey from 99% faith to 100% certainty is quite possible, provided we do what the Bible admonishes us to do, i.e., all those things that the fanatical fringe of Calvinists probably will erroneously tell you are "works" or "human effort" of no particular consequence for the Christian walk. For instance does the Bible admonish us:

- To, of our own free will, accept Jesus Christ to become a child of God.

> *"But as many as received him [JESUS CHRIST], to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his [JESUS'] name."*
>
> [John1:12KJV].
>
> *"And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."*
>
> [Mark1:15KJV]

- To, of our own free will, repent, be baptised and believe the Gospel in order to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

> *"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*
>
> [Acts2:38KJV].

- To, of our own free will, come to Jesus Christ for the (free) Waters of Life.

> *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*
>
> [Revelation22:17KJV].

- To, of our own free will, lay up treasures in Heaven where neither nor rust will corrupt or get stolen by thieves.

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"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:"

[Matthew6:20KJV].

- To, of our own free will, always pray and never to faint.

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

[Luke18:1KJV].

- To, of our own free will, hear and read the Word of God for more faith.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

[Romans10:17KJV].

- To, of our own free will, put on the Whole Armour of God and to "fight the Good (Gospel) Fight", "finish the Course" and "keep the Faith".

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil … Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

[Ephesians6:11-13KJV].

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

[2Timothy4:7KJV].

2.3 **The Life of Job.** The life of Job has proved that 100% Certainty, acquired in a lifetime, is possible. After his indescribable suffering and God's insightful sermons at the end, Job has had to humbly admit that God could do anything and that no task would be too difficult for Him to do. The Bible says:

"Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I <u>know</u> that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."

[Job42:1-2KJV].

"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

[James5:11KJV].

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2.4 **Job's Earthly Reward.** For those who say God does not intervene in human affairs, see how God has rewarded Job for his faith through trials:

> *"And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.*
> *Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.*
> *So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.*
> *He had also seven sons and three daughters.*
> *And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch.*
> *And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.*
> *After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.*
> *So Job died, being old and full of days."*
>
> [Job42:10-17KJV].

2.5 **God answers Job's prayer.** Even Job's wildest dream was fulfilled following his prayer at the height of his suffering.

> *"Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!"*
>
> [Job19:23-24KJV].

- Were Job's words "written" (published)? YES! (In the Book of Job).
- Were Job's words printed in a Book? YES! (In the Bible).
- Were his words graven with an iron pen and lead in a rock forever? YES! (In the Everlasting Word of God).

P.S. The words of Job were eventually written and carried by the winds of history into the Bible and graven into it as if into a ROCK (the indestructible Word of God) forever.

3. WHY WE MAY TRUST JESUS CHRIST WITH OUR FUTURE.

3.1 **Introduction.** Charles Spurgeon is reported to have said:

> *"Even though we cannot always trace God's Hand, we can still trust His Heart!"*

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I firmly believe in (and cling to it as if my life depends on it) God's immortal promise of:

"For I know the purposes which I am purposing for you, says Jehovah; purposes of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."
[Jeremiah29:11].

3.2 **Reasons for Trusting Jesus Christ with our Future.** The reasons are founded on the promises and prophecies of Jesus Christ, e.g., among others:

- The emergence of false Christs ('avatars', 'gurus', 'swamis', ''Christ's', 'god-men', 'Mahdis' etc.).

- Wars & rumours of wars; nations & kingdoms rising against each other.

- Famines all over the globe.

- Pestilences all over the world (Pandemics; epidemics; plagues).

- The harassment, persecution and even killing of Christians and destruction of Churches; WWII Holocaust etc.

- The worldwide avalanche of iniquity (crime, apostasy, anarchy, vice, immorality, injustice, discrimination).

- 'Signs' in heaven from the sun, moon and stars (natural as well as in space exploration, research and travel).

- Anxiety among nations in sea and waves 'roaring' (killer-floods; tsunamis; typhoons, cyclones etc.).

- Earthquakes in diverse places.

- The worldwide decline of and decay in morality & ethics, so aptly demonstrated by Leftist (profanity & blasphemy) driven films from Hollywood. People are literally getting 'filthier' (audiences included) exactly as the Bible anticipated [See Rev.22:11].

- The celebration of the woman who had poured the priceless ointment on Jesus' feet remembered today all over the world where the Gospel is preached, exactly as Jesus prophesied (in fact here am I remembering it now!). [See Matthew26:6-11].

- The worldwide preaching & publishing of the Gospel. [See Matthew24:14].

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- The immortal words of Jesus Christ that no force in the world has ever succeeded to extinguish or silence … where we look the Gospel is being preached! Jesus has solemnly promised:

> *"The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My Words shall not pass away."*
>
> [Matthew24:35].

P.S. These phenomena are occurring exactly as Jesus Christ prophesied. [See Matthew24:3-51; Mark13:1-37; Luke5-38].

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Chapter 9

THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
(1 Corinthians 1:18KJV)

The Bible says that the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. So, is Christianity "foolishness"?

1. **IS CHRISTIANITY FOOLISHNESS?** Ever so often one may hear a sceptic, or, an atheist, say that Christianity is "foolishness"; so, are they right? Is Christianity really foolishness? Many may perhaps be shocked to hear that, speaking in pure human terms, such people may actually be right.

In fact, as a Christian I bravely acknowledge ... observed from a human viewpoint, the whole concept, idea, religion and socio-cultural institution of Christianity was, in truth, originally founded and predicated on, "foolishness". However, I must add, it is a very special kind of foolishness, a kind of foolishness referred to as, "the foolishness of God".

What does the Bible say about the "foolishness" of God? Could God, yes, the absolutely infinite (and infinitely absolute) God, ever be 'foolish'? It stands to reason that, if God were really omnipotent (Almighty), He obviously could be 'foolish' too, if He ever should chose to be so. There is nothing that God cannot do (except lie). The Bible says that:

> *"For since, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom did not know God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe."*
>
> [1Corinthians1:21MKJV].

Here the Apostle Paul actually concedes that the preaching of the gospel is "foolishness", and that it was determined to be so and used in this way because, as history has shown, the world, by secular wisdom, could not, and would not, know God. What worldly, secular wisdom could not engineer and accomplish, was, in the end, engineered and accomplished by the wisdom of preaching, i.e., the "foolishness" of the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So, dear reader, that is why Christianity sometimes appears to be so foolish ... in the long run it was the only recipe that was destined to work. Some notes on the so-called 'foolishness' of God:

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1.1 Proposition #1. To them that perish the preaching of the Cross is foolishness.

> *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."*
> [1 Corinthians1:18KJV].

1.2 Proposition #2. God has made foolish the wisdom of the world.

> *"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"*
> [1 Corinthians1:20KJV].

1.3 Proposition #3. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

> *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*
> [1 Corinthians 1:21KJV]

1.4 Proposition #4. The Gospel of Christ crucified is a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness unto the Greeks.

> *"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."*
> [1 Corinthians1:23KJV].

1.5 Proposition #5. God's foolishness is wiser than men; and, His weakness stronger than men.

> *"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."*
> [1 Corinthians1:25KJV].

1.6 Proposition #6. By choice, the foolish things of God confound the wise, while the weak things of God confound the things that are mighty.

> *"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."*
> [1 Corinthians1:27KJV].

1.7 Proposition #7. Because the spiritual things of God are spiritually discerned, the natural man cannot know and receive them, because they are foolishness to Him.

> *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

[1 Corinthians2:14KJV].

1.8 **Proposition #8. With God the wisdom of the world is foolishness.**

"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness."
[1 Corinthians3:19KJV].

1.9 **Proposition #9. Those who in disobedience resist Jesus Christ are considered as having been bewitched and are foolish.**

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"
[Galatians3:1KJV].

2. **THE WISDOM OF GOD.** Ask the people from 'MENSA' ... most people in the so-called "high-I.Q." category will probably fall within the 130-140+ group; some may have I.Q.'s in the 160s, 180's and even 200+. In comparison, however, God, the Creator of heaven and earth, has an assumed I.Q. of INFINITY to the power of INFINITY (INFINITY^{infinity}). There is thus no way any man on earth will ever be able to compete with that. Even the Bible concedes that the mind of God is "infinite".

To save humankind from sin and provide humanity with the remarkable gift of Salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Calvary (Gk. 'Golgotha'), all of the wisdom and high (divine) I.Q. of God was not what really was needed for the exercise, for, in fact, His foolishness (the foolishness of the preaching of the gospel) has proved, over centuries, to have been totally sufficient. Why? Because the foolishness of God is even wiser than the wisdom of all the of the wisest people on earth all put together. The Bible says:

" ... but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness."
[1 Corinthians1:23MKJV].

Do the math:

2.1 If the *foolishness of God* could mean the Salvation of mankind, imagine what the wisdom of God, in Eternity, on the other hand could be able to do for man!

2.2 If the *death and resurrection of Jesus Christ*, God's Son, Saviour of the world and Messiah of the Jews, could mean Eternal Life of the believer, imagine what Christ's *life* could be able to do in Eternity for man!

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3. **WHY WAS THE GOSPEL A STUMBLING BLOCK?** Why was the gospel a stumbling block to Jews and Greeks? Because the gospel offended the Jews, i.e., the learned ecclesiastics and scholars of the day steeped in centuries of (very valuable and divinely inspired) Judaism, the Torah and Mosaic Law, and with the novel idea of Jesus Christ being introduced as the long-awaited Messiah, consequently received as completely foreign to them at the time.

The gospel also offended the Greeks, the intellectuals, philosophers and wise men of the day and paragons of worldly, human (secular and pagan) wisdom.

> *"Greco-Roman culture celebrated heroic figures who achieved glory through strength, wisdom, or noble deeds. Jesus, a humble carpenter executed as a criminal, did not fit the archetype of a divine or heroic figure. The Gospel's emphasis on humility, servanthood, and salvation through a crucified Messiah was antithetical to Greco-Roman ideals of honor and power."*
>
> [Grok Insights].

Do not scoff at the Greeks, however, for the entire New Testament was first given to us first in the Greek language; it would thus appear as if God really knew what He was doing, wasn't He?

4. **WHY DID THE WORLD'S WISDOM FAIL HUMANKIND?** The Bible is very clear ... the wisdom of God is in a totally different league than that of humankind, described by the Bible as 'foolishness with God'.

> *"For the wisdom of this world is <u>foolishness</u> with God; for it is written, "He takes the wise in their own craftiness."*
>
> [1 Corinthians 3:19MKJV].

The foolishness of God is nevertheless still far (absolutely, infinitely, divinely) superior to whatever humankind has to offer or able of ever conjuring up, so much so that it (the wisdom of humankind) was and is still being exposed as 'foolishness'.

Look at it this way: If scientists could concede that humankind thus far know only about 10% to 20% of what is going on in our oceans, and only about 5% of what is going on in the Cosmos (with the rest of the 95% referred to as 'dark matter & dark energy') who are we to try and second-guess God, or challenge Him on His ways? Couldn't He, or His Creation secrets, be hidden away from our observations and view in the 95% of the Cosmos we still know zilch about?

5. **THE SUPREMACY OF GOD'S SON AFFIRMED.** Students of Biblical prophecy tell us that, should Jesus of Nazareth ever be indefinitely rejected as the *de facto* Messiah of history, no other 'wannabe messiah' could ever be accepted in His place, as the 'prophetic-historical window' for the Messiah to appear

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has long since passed and such an imposter will have missed the 'prophetic bus' by a little more than 2000 years.

In order to dispel any uncertainty about the merit of my 'theology', the reader is encouraged to read the portions of Scripture below where the supremacy of Jesus Christ is elaborated upon and affirmed by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

> *"God, who at many times and in many ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son [JESUS] whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds, who being the shining splendor of His glory, and the express image of His essence, and upholding all things by the word of His power, through Himself cleansing of our sins, He [JESUS] sat down on the right of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as He [JESUS] has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*
>
> *"For to which of the angels did He say at any time, 'You are My Son, this day I have begotten You?' And again, 'I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?' And again, when He brings in the First-born into the world, He says, 'And let all the angels of God worship Him.' And of the angels He says, 'Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.' But to the Son [JESUS] He says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You [JESUS] have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows.'*
>
> *"And, 'You, Lord, have laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the works of Your hands. They shall perish, but You will remain. And they shall all become old as a garment, and as a covering You shall fold them up, and they shall be changed. But You are the same, and Your years shall not fail.' But to which of the angels, did He say at any time, 'Sit on My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool?' Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation?"*
>
> [Hebrews1:1-14MKJV].

> *"Therefore, having left the discourse of the beginning of Christ, let us go on to full growth, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the baptisms, of doctrine, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do, if God permits. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, and who have fallen away; it is impossible, I say, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify the Son of God afresh to themselves and put Him to an open shame.*
>
> *"(For the earth which drinks in the rain that comes often upon it, and brings forth plants fit for those by whom it is dressed, receives blessing from God. But that which bears thorns and briers is rejected and is a curse, whose end is to be burned.) But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you and things that accompany salvation,*

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though we speak in this way. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same eagerness to the full assurance of hope to the end, that you be not slothful, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

"For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, 'Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.' And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men truly swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. In this way desiring to declare more fully to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, God interposed by an oath, so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil, where the Forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

[Hebrews6:1-20MKJV].

To the skeptic or atheist tempted to say or think that I am a "fool" for still believing in and trusting Jesus of Nazareth (the Christ, or Anointed One) with my future, I would reply as follows: *"You say I am a 'fool' for Jesus? So, whose fool are you?"*

References.

1. Bible (KJV/MKJV).
2. Grok Insights
3. Stassen Archives.

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THE WISDOM OF GOD

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

[Romans11:33-36KJV].

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Attachment A: Names & Titles of Jesus Christ

[Source: *King James Version* of the Bible].

A
Advocate With the Father *1 Jhn.2:1*
Almighty *Rev.1:8*
Alpha & Omega (*Gk.* A&Z, Beginning & Ending) *Rev.1:8; Rev.22:13*
Amen, The (*Heb.* So be it/So it is) *Rev.3:14*
Angel *Gen.48:16; Exod.23:20,21*
Angel of His Presence *Isa.63:9*
Anointed One (His) (*See* Christ/Messiah/Shiloh) *Ps.2:2*
Apostle of Our Profession, The (*Gk. Apostolos* – One sent forth) *Heb.3:1*
Arm of the Lord *Isa.51:9*
Author & Finisher of Our Faith, The *Heb.12:2*

B
Beginning & End (*Gk.* A-Z) (*See* Alpha & Omega) *Rev.1:8; Rev.22:13*
Beginning of the Creation of God *Rev.3:14*
Beloved *Ephes.1:6*
Beloved Son *Luke9:35; 1Cor4:17; 2Peter1:17*
Blessed And Only Potentate *1 Tim.6:15*
Branch, The *Zch.3:8*
Bread Of Life *Jhn.6:48*
Bridegroom, The *Matt.9:15*
Bright And Morning Star, The *Rev.22:16*
Brightness Of His (the Father's) Glory, The Heb.*1:3*
Bringing Many Sons unto Glory (See *Isa.9:6*) *Heb.2:10*
Brother Of James, Juda, Joses & Simon *Mrk.6:3*

C
Captain Of Salvation *Heb.2:10*
Captain Of the Host of The Lord *Jos.5:14*
Carpenter, The *Mrk.6:3*
Carpenter's Son, The *Matt.13:55*
Chiefest Among Ten Thousand, The *SongofSolomon.5:10*
Chief Shepherd, The *1 Pet.5:4*
Child (A) *Isa.9:6*
Child Jesus, The *Luk.2:27*
Christ (*Gk.* Anointed One; *Matt.1:16;* Servant of The Lord. *See* Messiah) *Mrk.14:61*
Christ A King *Luk.23:2*
Christ Jesus *Acts 19:4; Rom.3:24; 8:1; 16:3; 1 Cor.1:2;30; Heb.3:1;1 Pet.5:10,14;1 Tim.1:15.*
Christ Jesus Our Lord *1 Tim.1:12; Rom.8:39*
Christ of God, The *Luk.9:20*
Christ of the Lord *Luk.2:26*
Christ Our Passover *1 Cor.5:7*
Christ the Chosen One of God *Luk.23:35*
Christ The Lord *Luk.2:11*
Commander to the People *Isa.55:4*
Consolation Of Israel *Luk.2:25*
Cornerstone (Chief), The *Ephes.2:20; Matt.21:42*
Counsellor *Isa.9:6*

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Covenant Of the People *Isa.42:6*
Creator Of Israel, The *Isa.43:15*
Crown of Glory and Diadem of Beauty unto the Residue of His People, A *Isa.28:5*

D
David, King of Israel and Judah *Jer.30:9*
Daysman Betwixt Us, A (Mediator) *Job 9:33*
Dayspring From on High *Luk.1:78*
Door Of the Sheep, The *Jhn.10:7*
Day Star, The *2 Pet.1:19*

E
Elect, Precious & Chief Cornerstone *1 Pet.2:6*
Elect (God's) *Isa.42:1*
Emmanuel (*Gk.* God With Us) *Matt.1:23*
Ensign Of the People, An *Isa.11:10*
Eternal Life *1 Jhn.5:20*
Everlasting Father (*See* Heb.2:10) *Isa.9:6*
Everlasting Light *Isa.60:20*
Express Image of His (God's) Person *Heb.1:3*

F
Faithful & True *Rev.19:11*
Faithful & True Witness *Rev.3:14*
Faithful Witness *Rev.1:5*
Fear and Dread of Israel *Isa.8:13*
First And Last *Rev.22:13; Rev.1:17 Rev.2:8; Isa.48:12*
First Begotten of the Dead *Rev.1:5*
Firstbegotten Into the World *Heb.1:6*
Firstborn Higher Than the Kings of the Earth *Ps.89:27*
Forerunner, The *Heb.6:20*
Friend Of Publicans & Sinners, A *Matt.11:19*

G
Gift Of God, The *Jhn.4:10*
Gin & Snare to Inhabitants of Jerusalem *Isa.8:14*
Glory of the People Israel *Luk.2:32*
God (*Heb.* 'Worshipful One'; 'Lord'; 'Jehovah': *Heb.*Yahweh, YHWH, 'The Existing One'; 'Elohim'; *Ps.45,7,8;*'Mighty One'; 'Master') *Jhn.1:1; Heb.1:8,9*
God Believed on in the World *1 Tim.3:16*
God Blessed Forever *Rom.9:5*
God Justified in the Spirit *1 Tim.3:16*
God Manifested in the Flesh *1 Tim.3:16*
God of Israel *Isa.45:15*
God of the Whole Earth, The *Isa.54:5*
God Our Saviour *1 Tim.2:3*
God Preached unto the Gentiles *1 Tim.3:16*
God Received up into Glory *1 Tim.3:16*
God Seen of Angels 1 Tim.3:16
God's Fellow *Zch.13:7*
God's Holy One *Ps.16:10*
God's Servant Israel *Isa.49:3*
God With Us (*See* Emmánuel/Immánuel) *Matt.1:23*
Good Master *Matt.19:16*

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Governor for Israel (A) *Matt.2:6*
Great God and Our Saviour Jesus Christ *Tit.2:13*
Great High Priest, A *Heb.4:14*
Great Shepherd of the Sheep, The *Heb.13:20*

H
Head of Every Man, The *1 Cor.11:3*
Head of the Church *Ephes.5:23; Col.1:18*
Head of the Corner *Matt.21:42; 1 Pet.2:7*
Heir of All Things *Heb.1:2*
He That Hath the Key of David *Rev.3:7*
He That Is Holy *Rev.3:7*
He That Is True *Rev.3:7*
He That Openeth, and No Man Shutteth *Rev.3:7*
He That Shutteth, and No Man Openeth *Rev.3:7*
High Priest, *Heb.8:1*
High Priest Forever After the Order of Melchisedec *Heb.6:20*
High Priest of Our Profession *Heb.3:1*
Him Which Is, and Which Was, and Which Is to Come *Rev.1:4*
His (God's) Dear Son *Col.1:13*
Holy And Just One *Acts 3:14*
Holy Child Jesus, The LORD's *Acts 4:30*
Holy One of God, The *Mrk.1:24*
Holy One of Israel, The *Isa.41:14;* 49:7; *54:5*
Holy One (Your) *Isa.43:15*
Holy Thing, That (*Heb.* Separated One) *Luk.1:35*
Horn of Our Salvation (*See* Salvation) *Luk.1:69*

I
I Am *Jhn.8:58*
Immánuel (Heb. God With Us) *Isa.7:14; Matt.1:23*

J
Jehovah (See God) *Exod.6:3; Ps.83:18; Isa.12:2; 26:4*
Jehovah-Jireh (God Who Provides) *Gen.22:14*
Jehovah-Nissi (God Is My Banner) *Exod.17:15*
Jehovah-Shalom (God Is Peace) *Judg.6:24*
Jesus (Heb.Yeshuah, Saviour) *Matt.1:16;1:21*
Jesus Christ (See Christ) *Matt.1:1; Jhn.1:17; Acts 2:38; Rom.1:1; 1 Cor.2:2; 2Cor.1:19; Gal.2:16; Phil.1:8; Heb.13:8; 1 Jhn.1:7* etc.
Jesus Christ Our Lord *Rom.1:3*
Jesus Christ Our Saviour *Tit.3:6*
Jesus Christ the Righteous *1 Jhn.2:1*
Jesus, King of the Jews *Matt.27:37*
Jesus of Nazareth *Mrk.1:24; Luk.24:19*
Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews *Jhn.19:19*
Jesus, Son of Joseph *Jhn.6:42*
Jesus the Christ *Matt.16:20*
Jesus the Son of God *Heb.4:14*
Judge, Our *Isa.33:22*
Judge of the Quick (Living) And the Dead, The *Acts 10:42*
Judge of Israel *Mic.5:1*
Just Man, That *Matt27:19*

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K
King, the Lord our Isa.33:22
King, Your Isa.43.15
King David their Jer.30:9
King of Glory Ps.24:9,10
King of Israel Jhn.1:49
KING of Kings 1 Tim.6:15 Rev.17:14; 19:16
King of the Daughter of Zion Matt.21:5
King of the Jews, Jesus of Nazareth, The (See Nazarene) Jhn.19:19
King Over All the Earth Zch.14:9

L
Lamb *Rev.5:6,8; 6:16; 7:9,10,17; 12:11; 13:8;14:1,4; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7,9; 21:9,14,22,23,27*
Lamb Of God *Jhn.1:29*
Last Adam, The *1 Cor.15:45*
Lawgiver, Our *Isa.33:22*
Leader And Commander to the People *Isa.55:4*
Light of life *Jhn.8:12*
Light of the Gentiles *Isa.42:6*
Lily of the Valley *Song of Solomon 2:1*
Living Bread That Came Down from Heaven, The *Jhn.6:51*
Living One That Has the Keys of Hell and Death *Rev.1:18*
Living Stone *1 Pet.2:4*
Light of the World, The *Jhn.8:12*
Light To Lighten the Gentiles, And the Glory of Thy People Israel *Luk.2:32*
Lion And Lord Out of the Tribe of Judah *Heb.7:14; Rev.5:5*
Lord, The (*See* God) *Isa.40:3*
Lord From Heaven, The *1 Cor.15:47*
Lord God Almighty *Rev.15:3*
Lord Jehovah, The *Isaiah12:2*
Lord Jesus *Acts7:59/Col.3:17/1 Thess.4:2*
Lord Jesus Christ *1 Cor.1:2,3; Acts 11:17 Rom.5:1,11; Acts16:31; 20:21*
Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory *Jas.2:1*
Lord Jesus Christ Our Saviour *Tit.1:4*
Lord Mighty in Battle *Ps.24:8*
Lord of All *Acts10:36; Rom.10:12*
Lord of Both the Dead and Living Rom.14:9
LORD of Lords *1 Tim.6:15; Rev.17:14; 19:16*
Lord of the Hosts *Ps.24:10 Isa.54:5*
Lord of the Sabbath *Mrk.2:28*
Lord Our Righteousness, The Jer.*23:6*
Lord's Christ, The *Luke.2:26*

M
Maker Of Jacob & Israel *Isa.44:2*
Man Christ Jesus, The *1 Tim.2:5*
Man of Sorrows & Acquainted with Grief *Isa.53:3*
Man, That Is God's Fellow *Zch.13:7*
Master (*See* Rabbi/Rabboni/God) *Matt.23:8*
Mediator Between God and Man, One *1 Tim.2:5*
Messenger of the Covenant *Mal.3:1*
Messiah (*Heb.* Anointed One. *See* Christ). *Jhn.1:41*

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Messiah the Prince, The *Dan.9:25*
Mighty God, The *Isa.9:6*
Mighty One of Jacob, The *Isa.49:26*
Mighty One of Israel, The *Isa.30:29*
Mighty to Save *Isa.63:1*
Minister of the Sanctuary & True Tabernacle, A *Heb.8:2*
Most Holy *Dan.9:24*
Most Mighty *Ps.45:3*

N
Nazaréne, A (From *Nazáreth,* not *Nazarite*) *Matt.2:23*

O
Only Begotten of the Father *Jhn.1:14*
Only Begotten Son Which Is in the Bosom of the Father, The *Jhn.1:18*
Only Wise God Our Saviour, The *Jud.1:25*
Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ *2 Pet.1:11; 2 Pet.3:18*
Our Passover, Christ *1Cor5:7*
Our Peace (He Is) *Ephes.2:14*

P
Petra (*Gk.* Rock) *Matt.16:18*
Physician, A *Matt.9:12*
Power Of God, The *1 Cor.1:24*
Precious Cornerstone, A Chief, Elect, A Tried, Sure Foundation *1 Pet.2:6; Isa.28:16*
Priest Forever After the Order of Melchisedec *Heb.7:17*
Prince (Messiah The) *Dan.9:25*
Prince of Life, The *Acts 3:15*
Prophet, A *Deut.18:15,18; Luk.24:19*
Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee, The *Matt.21:11*
Propitiation For Our Sins *1 Jhn.2:2*
Prince of Peace, The *Isa.9:6; Gen.49:10* (see Shiloh)
Prince of the Kings of the Earth, The *Rev.1:5*

Q
Quickening Spirit, The Last Adam was made a 1 *Cor.15:45*

R
Rabbi (*Ch./Heb.* Eminent One; Teacher) *Jhn.1:49*
Rabboni (*Aram. /Heb./Gk.)* ("Master!") *Jhn.20:16*
Ransom For All to Be Tested in Due Time *1 Tim.2:6*
Redeemer and Holy One of Israel *Isa.41:14; 48:17; 54:5*
Resurrection and Life, The *Jhn.11:25*
Righteous Servant (God's) *Isa.53:11*
Righteous Judge, The *2 Tim.4:8*
Righteous Branch, A Jer.*23:5*
Rock (*Gk.* Petra) *Matt.16:18*
Rock (Spiritual) *1 Cor.10:4*
Root & Offspring of David, The *Rev.5:5; Rev.22:16*
Root of Jesse, A *Isa.11:10*
Root Out of a Dry Ground, As a *Isa.53:2*
Root of David, The *Rev.5:5; 22:16*
Rose of Sharon. The *SongofS.2:1*

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S

Salvation/Salvation unto the End of the Earth, My (*Heb.* Prosperity) *Isa.49:6; Luk.2:30*
Sanctuary, A *Isa.8:14*
Saviour Isa.49:26; Matt.1:21; Ephes.5:23; Luk. 2:11; 2 Tim.1:10; Tit.2:13; 1Joh.4:14
Isa.43:3,11; 45:15
Sceptre Out of Israel *Num.24:17*
Second Man the Lord from Heaven, The *1 Cor.15:47*
Seed of Judah (*See* Shiloh) *Gen.49:10*
Seed of the Woman, The *Gen.3:15*
Servant the Branch, God's *Zch.3:8; Isa.42:1*
Servant of Rulers *Isa.49:7*
Shepherd and Bishop of Our Souls, The *1 Pet.2:25*
Shepherd of Israel *Ps.80:1*
Shiloh (*Heb.* Anointed One; Prince of Peace); *(See* Seed of Judah) *Gen.49:10*
Son (A) *Isa.9:6*
Son of a Carpenter ('Carpenter's Son') *Matt.13:55*
Son of David *Matt.9:27*

Son of God *Ps.2:7; 89:27*
Matt.3:17; 4:3,6; 11:27; 14:33
Mrk.1:1; 1:11; 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 14:61,62; 15:39
Luk.1:32,35; 3:22; 4:3,9; 8:28; 9:35; 10:22; 20:13; 22:29,70
Jhn.1:1,2,14,18,34,49; 3:16,17,18,34,35,36; 5:19,20,21,23,26,27,30,32,36,37;
6:27,38,40,46,57,69; 7:16,28,29; 8:16,19,26,27,28,29,38,40,42,49, 54; 9:35,36,37,38
Acts3:13,26
2Cor.1:3,19
Gal.1:16; 4:4
Ephes.1:3; 3:14
Col.1:19
Rom.1:3,4,9; 8:3,29,32
1Cor.1:9; 15:24
1Thess.1:10
Heb.1:1,2,3,5; 4:14; 5:5,8,10; 6:6; 7:3; 10:29
2Pet.1:17
1Jhn.1:7; 2:22,23,24; 3:8,23; 4:9,10, 14
Rev.2:18

Son Of Man
Matt.11:19; 16:27,28;18:11; 20:28;26:2;26:45,64
Mark.2:28;9:9,12;10:33,45;14:21,62
Luk.5:24; 17:22,24; 18:31; 19:10; 21:36;22:48,69
Joh.5:27; 12:34; 13:31
Acts7:56
Rev.1:13; 14:14

Son Of Mary *Mrk.6:3*
Son of the Blessed (God, The) *Mrk.14:61*
Son of the Father *2 Jhn.1:3*
Son of the Highest, The *Luk.1:32*
Spirit (Quickening) *1 Cor.15:45*
Spiritual Rock, That *1 Cor.10:4*
Star Out of Jacob, A *Num.24:17*
Stone of Stumbling & Rock of Offense, To Both the Houses of Israel *Isa.8:14*
Stone Which the Builders Rejected *Matt. 21:42*

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Stone Which the Builders Disallowed *1 Pet.2:7*
Sun of Righteousness, The *Mal.4:2*
Sure Foundation, A *Isa.28:16*
Surety of a Better Testament *Heb.7:22*

T
Teacher Come from God, A *Jhn.3:2*
Tender Plant, A *Isa.53:2*
Tried Stone, A *Isa.28:16*
True God and Eternal Life, The *1 Jhn.5:20*
True Light Which Lighteth Every Man That Cometh into the World *Jhn.1:9*
True Vine (The) *Jhn.15:1*

W
Way, Truth & Life, The *Jhn.14:6*
Wonderful *Isa.9:6*
Word, The *Jhn.1:1*
Word of God, The *Rev.19:13*
Word of Life, The *1 Jhn.1:1*
Wisdom *Prov.8:12*
Wisdom of God, The *1 Cor.1:24*
Wisdom and Righteousness and Sanctification and Redemption *1 Cor.1:30*
Witness To the People, A *Isa.55:4.*

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Attachment B: Recommended Reading

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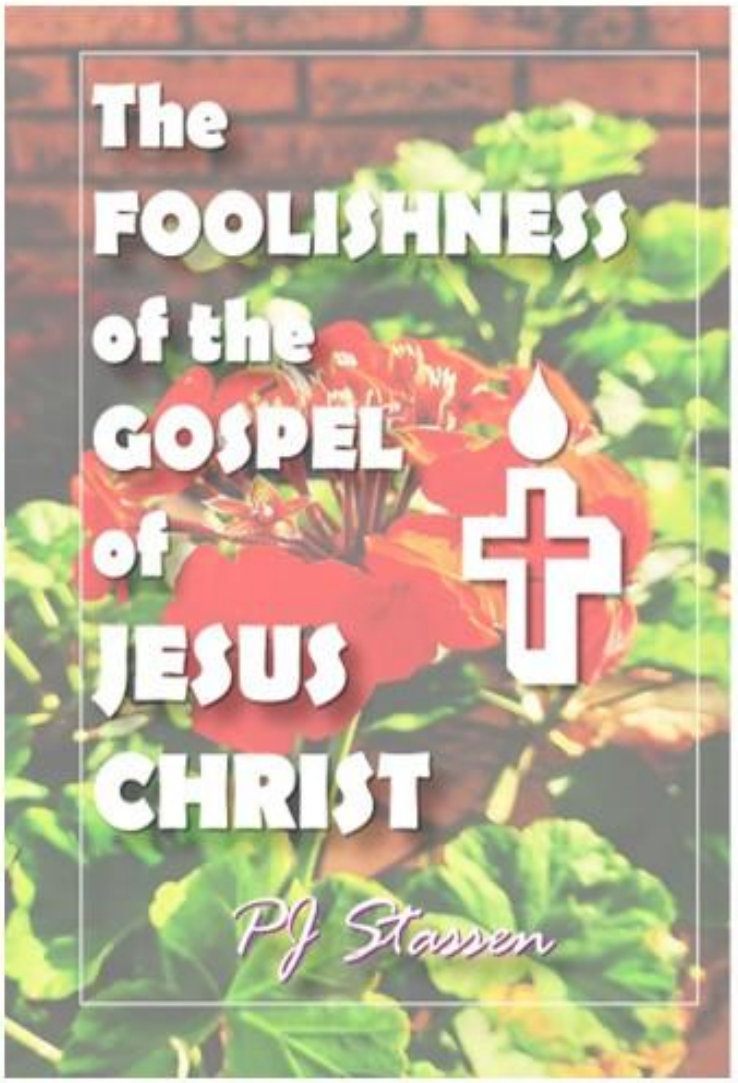
Author Profile

P. J. Stassen, born in 1947 in Randgate, South Africa, holds a B.A. degree in Industrial Psychology & Sociology (Industrial) from the University of South Africa. A former businessman who, after mandatory military conscription, spent the first 12 years of his life in 1966 in the field of retail (Textiles & General Dealer) in a family business begun by his father in 1964, thereafter worked at various other jobs eventually arriving in the fulfilling position of a corporate trainer with Kumba Resources (formerly Iscor Iron Ore Mine) in the Bushveldt region of South Africa during the years 1986 and 1997. At the time of his retirement in 2013 he was engaged in Occupational Health & Safety Training in the corporate environment on a contract basis for a Johannesburg company.

P.J. Stassen and his wife are both retired and live in Centurion, South Africa after having also served in their capacities as gospel musicians (pianist & organist respectively) in churches in places like Vanderbijlpark, Bloemfontein, Thabazimbi, Sinoville and Centurion.

P.J. Stassen writes in the fields of Christian Apologetics, Evangelical Christianity and Biblical Creationism.



THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE GOSPEL

"But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness."

[1 Corinthians1:23MKJV].

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